MICHELANGELO

A·RECORD·OF·HIS·LIFE

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MICHELANGELO

A RECORD OF HIS LIFE AS TOLD IN HIS OWN LETTERS AND PAPERS

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MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI

From an engraving by Giulio Bonasoni, in the Print Room, British Museum

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MICHELANGELO

A RECORD OF HIS LIFE AS TOLD IN HIS OWN LETTERS AND PAPERS

TRANSLATED AND EDITED BY

ROBERT W. CARDEN, A.R.I.B.A.

AUTHOR OF "THE CITY OF GENOA," "THE LIFE OF GIORGIO VASARI"

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PREFACE

It is now nearly three hundred and fifty years since Michelangelo Buonarroti was laid to rest in Santa Croce at Florence: it is more than that since the first writer, his friend Giorgio Vasari, took up his pen to write an account of his life and works. The theme has proved so vast that it seems to have no limit, for writer after writer has come forward either to sift the old material and set it in a new shape, or to weave new facts into it, until it would seem impossible that yet more remained to be said. There are in existence, however, as all who have studied the subject must know, a vast number of the artist's letters, contracts, memoranda and miscellaneous papers; and while some of these are to be found scattered here and there through the several English "Lives" of Michelangelo which have been published from time to time, they appear more often than not in a mutilated form and divorced from their context. These invaluable documents—there are four hundred and ninety-five letters, to say nothing of the memoranda and other papers—have practically been used only as a source of information whence dates and facts might be extracted and dressed for the most part in other words according to the requirements of their users, while no attempt has been made hitherto to map out the life of Michelangelo solely by the light of his own writings.

The present volume aims at filling this gap. A large number of the original documents are preserved in the British Museum, and the remainder, with a few exceptions, are in the Archivio Buonarroti in Florence. The easily accessible material was so abundant, indeed, that the most difficult part of my task lay, not in searching for fresh documents but in selecting as many of the more important papers as could be condensed into the limits of the present volume. As a result, my selection has been of necessity reduced to a little more than two hundred of the letters, or roughly two-fifths of the total number known to exist. Many of those which are omitted have comparatively little interest: some are merely covering letters, some are receipts, others are rejected drafts of other letters here translated. Some few are documents that would have found a place in these pages had there been room, but whenever I had to choose between two letters of equal interest I have given the preference to the one which seemed to bridge the largest gap between its neighbours.

A moment's consideration will show that a book planned on these lines cannot pretend to set the whole life of the subject before the reader. A long correspondence with his family in Florence while he was working for Julius II. in Bologna inevitably comes to an end when he returns to his home, so that we lose sight of the many subjects under discussion; and after summoning his nephew Lionardo to Rome in later years to settle certain affairs of importance, we are left in ignorance of the arrangements ultimately made, and for a similar reason.

Then, too, there are other gaps in his correspondence which can only be due to the loss of some of his letters, and these I have endeavoured to bridge as lightly as possible in order to avoid the imputation of having myself taken an unfair share of the space at my disposal for the whole work. Such notes as these serve only to link one letter to the other and do not pretend to deal with all or any of the events which occurred in the intervals, and which will be found fully dealt with by such writers as Grimm, Symonds, Sir Charles Holroyd and Mr. Gerald S. Davies.

Even with these omissions my task has been by no means an easy one, for Michelangelo made no pretence at being a polished writer—I exclude, of course, his poems, to which I have made no reference in this volume—and frequently employed phrases and idioms which, to say the least, are unusual and often open to more than one interpretation. The bewildering interchange of the "tu" and the "voi" made it imperative that the English equivalents of "thou" and "ye" should be adopted so as to preserve the sense of the original, with the result that the letters appear more stilted in diction than is really the case. In the spelling of proper names I have preferred to use the forms adopted by Michelangelo, giving the correct orthography within parentheses wherever it appeared to be required.

It is perhaps because Michelangelo holds so unique a position in art that the personal side of his character has been almost overlooked. The Michelangelo we meet in the many "Lives" which have been published is not wholly the same human being we find revealed

in his letters. Such of these as have been published bear exclusively, or at least largely, upon the artistic side of his career. The purely domestic letters to his nephew and to his intimate friends have not hitherto received the attention they merit; it is in these that we find revealed all the peculiarities of his nature. Something we already know of endless labours undertaken solely for the purpose of enriching his father, his brothers and his dearly-loved nephew Lionardo, but nothing has been told us, for instance, of the almost grandmotherly letters he indited to that nephew when he was about to choose a wife. In every word of these we see his profound mistrust of the gentler sex. "Thou requirest someone who will remain with thee . . . and will not desire to put on airs or go off every day to parties and weddings . . . it is easy for a woman to become a wanton." He is thrown into a mild state of agitation because Lionardo at one time thinks of marrying a girl with short sight, and urges him not to do anything of the kind, telling him there must be others whose vision is normal and who at the same time will not be ashamed to look after the saucepans and other domestic matters. This sort of wife, he urges, would be less likely to waste his substance in worldly amusements and frivolity. The ideal wife is sound of wind and limb, noble of blood and empty of purse, for then she would not be in a position to kick over the traces. As for her looks, "fortune has not favoured thee so extensively in face or figure as to make thee worthy of the first beauty in Florence."

The primary object of her existence is to be the

mother of children, for in Lionardo's marriage lay the sole hope of saving the family from extinction; but much as Michelangelo longed to see his nephew surrounded by numerous children he still left his choice free with a generosity which we can only admire in proportion as it is rare. "I do not wish thee to do for my sake what thou wouldst not do for thine own." When at length Lionardo married Cassandra Ridolfi, Michelangelo showed his unbounded satisfaction by a desire to load her with gifts, but he knows so little of women that he has to ask his friends what sort of a present he ought to give. "I have been told that a fine string of valuable pearls would be a suitable gift." The advice was good, and surely pleasing to the bride.

All the affection he had lavished upon his father and brothers, as the older generation died out, gradually centred in this one nephew, but it must not be supposed that this affection invariably found expression in the letters of the artist. On the contrary, they are frequently querulous, sometimes abusive and threatening. His nephew's handwriting perhaps annoys him more than anything else, and though it may seem something to excite laughter after the lapse of nearly four centuries to hear Michelangelo scolding the younger man, it can only be real vexation that makes him say, "Do not write to me again; every time one of thy letters arrives I get an attack of the fever because of the trouble I have to read it." The storms of passionate reproach which burst periodically about the heads of his brothers and nephew—and we must admit that

Michelangelo had ample justification for his wrath—passed away quickly, frequently before the letter closed. After a denunciation written in red-hot rage we come upon the postscript: "if you should meet the boy's father explain the matter to him gently: tell him he is a good lad but too refined and not suited to my work." After sending an angry message to his friend Fattucci he adds a postscript telling his nephew not to deliver the message. These are not incongruities; they are rather the effect of disappointment after disappointment acting upon a kindly and affectionate nature.

Michelangelo was one whose goodness of heart came perilously near to being soured by adversity, and he ended by becoming something of a fatalist. In his earlier years he had been content to think that "God did not create us so that He might abandon us afterwards": a few years later he finds it difficult to bow to the Divine Will—"I would to God that things which are not displeasing to Him were not displeasing to me." The full stream of his pessimism is met in his later letters to Lionardo: "I would remind thee that to be getting on in Florence is to be going backwards." And when Lionardo's children die one by one in early childhood he shows no surprise: God never intended his family to increase and multiply; there was never wont to be more than one heir at a time.

His ambition in life, apart from art, was the resuscitation of his family, which he always believed to be descended from the Counts of Canossa; and to fulfil this object there was no hardship too severe for

him to face. While living in such a miserable condition that he had to share his bed with three workmen he yet contrived to send money to his father and brothers in Florence, and even when he describes himself as being at hand-grips with poverty, or compelled to convert a valuable piece of stuff given him by the nephew he had himself enriched into bread to save himself from starvation, he never thinks of asking those he has benefited to return any portion of his gifts. While Lionardo lives in Florence as a gentleman Michelangelo lives poorly in Rome: his living arrangements are "exceedingly bad," he says, and before he can give hospitality to his nephew he will have to engage a servant, otherwise he will be obliged to go into the kitchen and cook the meals himself. This, and his solitary habits—"I live in a miserable fashion, caring neither for life nor for honours . . . I suffer excessive hardships, assailed by a thousand anxieties"—had their effect upon his constitution, and when he became a martyr to renal and urinary calculi he confesses to his nephew that it is "the result of incessant discomfort and continued neglect of health." He does not regret it. He is the self-appointed drone of the family, since none of his brothers are capable of assisting him. He sends them money, he chides them for their want of gratitude; but he sends them more money, nevertheless, and more again so that they may buy a house of honourable appearance, because "an honourable house standing within the city will be a great credit to us . . . for after all we are citizens and descended from very noble ancestors." What grieves him at

the moment is the poor spirit of Gismondo, who has settled down as a farmer at Settignano. One might think it a sign of grace that Gismondo should settle down at all after his wild youth, but Michelangelo wished him to return to Florence and enjoy the honours he cared not to accept for himself. "I do not wish to tell thee the miserable state in which I found our family when I began to work for it first; a whole book would not suffice for my story, and I never received anything in return save ingratitude."

Beside the members of his family, Michelangelo found another outlet for his generosity in numerous acts of charity. "When thou hearest of some case of extreme poverty in the house of a noble citizen . . . I should be glad if thou wouldst inform me thereof, because I would like to help them for the good of my soul." As was perhaps natural in a more believing age than the present, these acts of piety increase with increasing years, though Michelangelo was always ready to help the needy. Lionardo became his almoner in Florence, and does not appear to have been an over willing one since he is told that the money thus distributed will not diminish his own portion and therefore he need not begrudge it. Then, too, he tells us himself that he made a rich man of Francesco degli Amadori—the faithful Urbino—and we have evidence enough to warrant the assumption that he took personal charge of the widow and orphans when Urbino died. He was, indeed, generous almost to a fault, and while the pleasure he experiences at the arrival of any little present is apparent, it is always tinged with the regret that others should spend their

money on him, forgetting that he had himself given them the money. "I have received the . . . shirts, there were eight of them and they are very beautiful. . . . It troubles me, however, to think that I am depriving thee of them, because I have quite enough of my own."

There are other aspects of Michelangelo's character which, although far less attractive, yet call for notice. Chief of these is his timorousness. We know how he fled from Florence during the siege, an act of desertion which would have cost him his life perhaps if he had been less of an artist and more of a soldier: we know that he would have fled again from Florence when the Medici returned, for he implored his father and brothers to do so: we know that he undertook an unpremeditated pilgrimage to Loreto in 1556 which coincided somewhat suspiciously with the invasion of the Papal territories by the Imperial troops. These are indications which ought not to be overlooked in an estimate of his character. Then, too, we have ample witness in his letters that he was quick to take offence, quicker still to suspect those with whom he had dealings of a desire to cheat him by every possible means. We see the shadow fall on his brothers one by one, on the Spedalingo at Santa Maria Nuova who banked his money, on those from whom he wished to purchase lands, and on every person who had the temerity to suggest a possible wife for Lionardo. Yet I am not sure that most of what has been attributed to suspiciousness ought not rather to be written down as nervousness induced by the cruel disappointments which, as we know, crowded so thickly upon him.

"I am not lucky here," he says, while in Rome. If that be his conviction the position he takes is logical, for the whole world might be expected to have a part in his ill-luck by conspiring together to defraud him.

Great as an artist excelling in all three of the chief branches of his calling, he had as little in common with the artists of his day as with other men. He lived doubly alone in the bewildering Renaissance world of Rome. As there were none in art great enough to be his rivals it would almost seem that among men there were none great enough to be his friends. The love of woman came not into his life; he had espoused Art alone, but she bore him children so superlatively wonderful that, like their father, they need fear no rivals.

ROBERT W. CARDEN.

LONDON.
June, 1912.

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Michelangelo,

A Record of his Life as told in his own Letters and Papers

MICHELANGELO, the son of Lodovico di Lionardo Buonarroti Simoni, was born at Caprese on March 6th, 1475, his father being then Podestà of Caprese. It is needless to quote once more the entry in Lodovico's *Ricordi;* useless to write of Michelangelo's early childhood, his desire to become a sculptor, and his apprenticeship to Domenico Ghirlandaio at the age of thirteen. The purpose of this book is to set out in order the letters and other records left by the artist himself so that as far as possible they may tell his life-story in his own words.

From the care of Ghirlandaio Michelangelo passed to the pleasant garden of the Medici, hard by the Convent of San Marco, whence Fra Girolamo Savonarola was soon to rule Florence as the agent on earth of the Son of God; and here he was brought to the notice of Lorenzo the Magnificent. Condivi tells us how the Magnificent one day sent for the youthful sculptor's father, desiring to bestow some benefit upon him: but the story is only of interest here because it reveals the father as a man of singularly small business capacity, and one who, as Lorenzo had prophesied, remained a poor man—or would have remained so had not Michelangelo helped him

—until the endless praises bestowed upon his matchless son grew faint in his ears with the approach of death. Lorenzo died on April 8th, 1492, and two years later Michelangelo wandered to Bologna and Venice, subsequently returning once more to Florence, to find that the seat of government had already shifted from the Palace of the Medici to the Convent of San Marco. From Florence he travelled to Rome, desiring to regain possession of the Cupid which, as the historian tells us, had been sold by a dealer, Baldassare del Milanese by name, to Raffaello Riario, Cardinal di San Giorgio, as a genuine work of antiquity. It may be mentioned that Baldassare's price was the sum of two hundred ducats, while the author of the work only received thirty ducats.

The first of Michelangelo's letters still extant was written a week after he arrived in Rome, and though intended for the eye of Lorenzo di Pier Francesco de' Medici, at whose instigation he had buried the Cupid in order that it might pass for a genuine antique, it was addressed to the painter Botticelli, who apparently was to convey it to its proper destination.

From Rome.
Christus.
On the 2nd day of July, 1496.

MAGNIFICENT LORENZO, ETC.,—I write this merely to inform you that on Saturday last we arrived here in safety, and went immediately to visit the Cardinal di San Giorgio, to whom I presented your letter. I believe he was glad at my arrival, and he straightway expressed a desire that I would go and inspect certain

statues, which detained me for the remainder of that day, so that I was unable to deliver your other letters. On the Sunday the Cardinal went to his new house (*) and there caused me to be summoned. I went to him accordingly, and he asked my opinion of the statues I had seen. I told him what I thought; and certainly I consider that some of them are very beautiful. He then asked me if I had sufficient courage to undertake a beautiful work on my own account. I replied that I should not be able to produce any work equal to those I had been shown, but that I was willing he should see for himself what I could do. We have bought a piece of marble sufficiently large for a life-size figure, and on Monday I shall begin to work upon it.

Last Monday I delivered your other letters to Pagolo Rucellai, (†) who offered to place the money at my disposal, and to Cavalcanti. Afterwards I gave the letter to Baldassarre, and asked him to give me back the Cupid (*banbino*), saying that I was willing to refund the money. But he answered me only with rough words, saying he would rather break it into a hundred pieces: he had bought the *banbino*, he said, and it was therefore his: he had letters from the person to whom he sold it showing that its new owner was well satisfied with his bargain: and he did not think he would be compelled to return it. He complained bitterly of you, saying you had spoken ill of him.

(*) The Palazzo della Cancelleria.

(†) Paolo di Pandolfo Rucellai, who died in 1509. The Baldassare mentioned in the letter is Baldassare del Milanese, the vendor of the Cupid, already referred to.

Some of our Florentines took the matter up, hoping to get it settled, but they were unable to do anything. I am now hoping to arrange the matter through the medium of the Cardinal's good offices, for so I have been advised to proceed by Baldassarre Balducci. (*) I will keep you informed as to how the business proceeds. I have nothing more to add. I commend myself to you. May God guard you from evil.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

Michelangelo remained in Rome for more than a year, and received at the hands of the Cardinal di San Giorgio the first of those disappointments which were to fall so plentifully to his lot from successive prelates and pontiffs. The one bright feature of these long months was the unwavering friendship of Iacopo Gallo, for whom he carved the Bacchus now in the Uffizi at Florence. That he was deeply concerned for the safety of Savonarola is probable, and his interest in the Frate is shown by his letters: while the treatment to which his brother, Lionardo Buonarroti, a Dominican friar, was subjected at Viterbo may also be considered as the result of an over-warm adherence to the teachings of the great Dominican leader. The first of the following letters, addressed to his brother Buonarroto, is written in a disguised hand and signed "Thy Piero." There can be no question, however, as to the identity of the

(*) A Florentine engaged in the banking house of Iacopo Gallo, the latter a Roman. Both were on terms of considerable intimacy with Michelangelo.

writer, in view of its contents and their agreement with the succeeding letter, which Michelangelo signed with his own name. The second letter does not mention Savonarola, and we have here the probable key to the elaborate secrecy of the first communication. While in Florence Savonarola contrived with varying success to maintain his own position, in Rome Fra Mariano da Gennazzano, General of the Augustinian Order, was engaged in whetting the anger of Alexander VI., endeavouring to stir him to violent action: and Michelangelo, aware of the machinations of Fra Mariano, well knew the risks he might run in the papal city if a letter bearing his signature and expressing approval of Savonarola were to fall into the hands of his enemies.

From Rome.

Prudente giovane Buonarroto di Lodovico Bonarroti, in Florence.

In the name of God, this — day of March, 1497.

Dear Brother—for as such I esteem thee, etc.,—From thy brother Michelagniolo I have received thy letter, from which I derived the greatest comfort, chiefly because it contains news of your seraphic (*sarafico*) Frate Jeronimo, who has set the whole of Rome talking. They say here that he is a vile heretic: so much so that at all costs he ought to come to Rome and prophesy a little for these people here; then they would canonise him. Wherefore let all his friends be of good courage.

Brother, thou art constantly in my thoughts; wherefore be of good courage and strive to learn all thou

canst, as thou art doing. I have told Frizzi (*) everything, and he understands the whole matter. Fra Mariano [da Genazzano] has nothing but evil to say of your prophet. I have nothing more to add. In my next letter I will give thee more information, for now I am in a hurry. There is no other news to give thee, save that seven paper bishops were made yesterday, and five of them were hanged by the neck. Bear my remembrances to all the members of thy family, and especially to Lodovico my father, for as such I esteem him: and when thou writest hither, commend me to Michelagniolo. No more. Written in the dark.

THY PIERO,
in Rome.

The "paper bishops" referred to in this letter were offenders against the law who were condemned to stand in the pillory with paper caps on their heads. Buonarroto was born on May 26th, 1577, and was younger than Michelangelo by two years.

From Rome.

Domino Lodovico Buonarroti,
in Florence.

In the name of God, this First day of July, 1497.

MOST REVERED AND DEAR FATHER,—You must not be surprised that I have not yet returned to you, for

(*) Federigo di Filippo Frizzi, a Florentine sculptor, who was subsequently entrusted with the task of restoring Michelangelo's statue of the Risen Christ, in the Minerva at Rome.

I have failed in all my attempts to settle my business with the Cardinal, and I have no wish to leave Rome until I have received satisfaction and have been paid for my work. With these exalted personages one has to go slowly, for they cannot be forced into action. I believe, however, that the end of the coming week will certainly see all my affairs arranged.

I must tell you that Fra Lionardo (*) has returned here to Rome, and says he was obliged to flee from Viterbo and that his frock has been taken away from him. He wished to return to you: wherefore I gave him a gold ducat for his journey, which he asked of me. I think you must already know of this, for by now he ought to be with you.

I know of nothing else I have to tell you, for I am surrounded by uncertainties and know not as yet which way matters will turn: but I hope soon to be with you once more. I am well, and trust that you are the same. Commend me to my friends.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
Sculptor, in Rome.

In spite of the hopes for a speedy return to Florence which find a place in this letter, Michelangelo was still in Rome during the latter part of August, fretting at the delays that detained him, and at the news which reached him from home concerning his father's financial difficulties. A certain Consiglio d'Antonio Cisti held the ex-Podestà of Caprese's bond for 90 broad florins of gold, and as the latter had not the

(*) Lionardo Buonarroti, already mentioned as having entered Savonarola's order of Dominicans.

wherewithal to discharge his liability, he stood in peril of being attached as a debtor. To Michelangelo who had already become the mainstay of the family, his thoughts turned naturally in this dilemma, and Buonarroto, Michelangelo's younger brother, was sent to Rome to explain matters by word of mouth and to ask assistance.

From Rome.

Domino Lodovico Buonarroti,
in Florence.

In the name of God, this 19th day of August, 1497.

DEAREST FATHER,—I write this to let you know that Buonarroto arrived here on Friday last, and that directly I heard of it I went to see him at his inn. He gave me all the news by word of mouth, and he tells me further that Consiglio, the draper, is causing you a great deal of anxiety, that he is unwilling to agree to any terms, and that he wishes to have you arrested. My advice is that you should endeavour to make some arrangement with him, and should pay him a few ducats in advance: then let me know what arrangement has been made between you and how much remains to be paid. If you have not this money I will send it you, although I have but little myself; but as I have already said, I will do my best to find the sum, so that you may not be obliged to borrow it from the *Monte*, as Buonarroto says you will have to do. Do not marvel if sometimes my letters are filled with wrathful sentences, for I am kept continually in a state of agitation by many things which cannot fail to cause anxiety to one who is absent from his own home.

I was instructed by Piero de' Medici to make a statue, and I bought the piece of marble for it; but I have never set my hand to the work because he has not done by me as he promised. I am accordingly working for myself, and am carving a figure for my own pleasure. I bought a piece of marble and paid five ducats for it, but it proved to be of no use, and the money was thrown away. Then I bought another piece and paid away another five ducats, and it is on this I am now working for my own amusement. I tell you these things so that you may know that I, too, have my troubles and expenses. Nevertheless, whatever sum you ask me for I will send you, even if I have to sell myself into slavery to raise it.

Buonarroto arrived here quite safely and has returned to the inn, where he has a room and is comfortable; he shall lack for nothing for as long as it pleases him to stay here. I have not the means to have him with me as I am myself lodged in the house of another, but you may rest assured that he shall want for nothing. Well, as I hope you are.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

On this letter Lodovico has written the words :— "He says he will help me to pay Consiglio." That is well-nigh all that ever seemed to concern the incessantly needy family of the artist in Florence. Michelangelo was their bank until death released him from his responsibilties, one by one. There is an interval of some nine years before we have another letter, but the first portion of this period is covered

by the making of the Pietà, now in St. Peter's at Rome; that group which, it may be, of all others best expresses the sublime mystery of virgin purity immutable in the Mother of God. We need not wonder if, thralled by so exalted a thought, Michelangelo shows the Madonna to us still young, her cheeks still rounded by the touch of youth, and her brow scarcely furrowed even by the immense tragedy of the past few days, while her Son, who might seem rather to be her Brother, lies once more in her arms after the lapse of three-and-thirty years.

This Madonna della Pietà was carved for Jean de la Groslaye, Cardinal di San Dionigi, and seems to have been contemplated, though not actually begun, some months before the drawing up of the final contract under which the work was executed. The contract is as follows :—

Die VII mensis augusti, 1498.

Be it known and manifest to all who shall read this present writing that the Most Reverend Cardinal di San Dionisio has agreed with *Maestro* Michelangelo, statuary of Florence, that the said *Maestro* shall at his own proper costs make a Pietà of marble; that is to say, a draped figure of the Virgin Mary with the dead Christ in her arms, the figures being life-size, for the sum of four hundred and fifty gold ducats in papal gold (*in oro papali*), to be finished within the term of one year from the beginning of the work. And the said Most Reverend Cardinal promises to pay the money in the manner following: that is to say, *imprimis*, he promises to pay the sum of one hundred

Photo Anderson

PIETÀ

After the statue by Michelangelo in S. Peter's, Rome

and fifty gold ducats in papal gold before ever the work shall be begun, and thereafter while the work is in progress he promises to pay to the aforesaid Michelangelo one hundred ducats of the same value every four months, in such wise that the whole of the said sum of four hundred and fifty gold ducats in papal gold shall be paid within a twelvemonth, provided that the work shall be finished within that period: and if it shall be finished before the stipulated term his Most Reverend Lordship shall be called upon to pay the whole of the sum outstanding.

And I, Iacopo Gallo, do promise the Most Reverend Monsignore, that the said Michelangelo will complete the said work within one year, and that it shall be more beautiful than any work in marble to be seen in Rome to-day, and such that no master of our own time shall be able to produce a better. And I do promise the aforesaid Michelangelo on the other hand, that the Most Reverend Cardinal will observe the conditions of payment as herein set forth in writing. And in token of good faith I, Iacopo Gallo, have drawn up the present agreement with my own hand the year month and day aforesaid. Furthermore be it understood that all previous agreements between the parties drawn up by my hand, or rather, by the hand of the aforesaid Michelangelo are by this present declared null and void, and only this present agreement shall have effect.

The said Most Reverend Cardinal gave to me, Iacopo Gallo, one hundred gold ducats of the chamber in gold (*ducati d'oro in oro di Camera*) some time ago, and on the aforesaid day as above set forth I received

from him a further sum of fifty gold ducats in Papal gold.

Ita est Ioannes, Cardinalis S. Dyonisii.

Idem Iacobus Gallus, *manu proprio.*

There is an interval of some two and a half years, until May 22nd, 1501, before Michelangelo speaks to us again. This time it is in a memorandum referring to the statues for the Piccolomini Chapel in the Cathedral at Siena, but the proposed work was delayed for another four years, and during this period the colossal David of marble and the smaller David of bronze occupied much of his time. The contract, too, for the twelve statues for Santa Maria del Fiore was also drawn up before the Piccolomini statues were begun. The contract for the colossal David runs as follows:—

1501, *die XVJ augusti.*

Spectabiles . . . viri, the Consuls of the Arte della Lana and the Lords Overseers [of the Cathedral] being met together in joint assembly within the hall of the said Overseers, have chosen as sculptor to the said Cathedral the worthy master, Michelangelo, the son of Lodovico Buonarroti, a citizen of Florence, to the end that he may make, finish and bring to perfection the male figure known as the Giant, nine *braccia* in height, already blocked out in marble by Maestro Agostino *grande*, of Florence, and badly blocked; and now stored in the workshops of the Cathedral.

The work shall be completed within the period and term of two years next ensuing, beginning from the first day of September next ensuing, with a salary and payment of six broad florins of gold in gold for every month. And for all other works that shall be required about the said building (*edificium*) the said Overseers bind themselves to supply and provide both men and scaffolding from their Office and all else that may be necessary. When the said work and the said male figure of marble shall be finished, then the Consuls and Overseers who shall at that time be in authority shall judge whether it merits a higher reward, being guided therein by the dictates of their own consciences.

It is quite clear that the Agostino here referred to is Agostino di Duccio, though the account-books of the Cathedral speak of Bartolommeo Baccellino as being the first to work upon this block of marble.

The next contract to which Michelangelo was a party is that for the bronze David, and is dated August 12th, 1502. The figure is to be two *braccia* and a half in height, and is to be finished within a period of six months, the price being assessed by friends of each party. The Lords Priors, who have ordered the work to be done, are to supply all material and to allow the artist fifty broad florins of gold in gold for his expenses. The figure is intended as a present for the Maréchal de Gies. Before it was finished, however, the Maréchal fell into disfavour with his sovereign, and the David was presented to the Treasurer Robertet, in whose château at Blois

it remained until, in troublous times, it was melted down to swell the supply of cannon.

It was some six months later that Michelangelo undertook to carve the twelve statues for the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore at Florence. The contract is dated April 24th, 1503. He is entrusted with the task of furnishing twelve statues of the Apostles, each to be four *braccia* and a quarter in height, "in honour of God, for the fame of the whole city, and as an ornament to the said city and the church of Santa Maria del Fiore aforesaid: and they are to be put in the said church to replace the painted figures which are at present in the said church," or in such other positions as the Consuls and Overseers shall select. They are to be finished within twelve years, to date from the signing of the contract, and are to be delivered at the rate of at least one statue a year. The Overseers, on their part, agree to pay all the expenses of the journey if Michelangelo should visit Carrara in order to superintend the quarrying of the marble; and, apart from this, he is to have a regular salary of two broad florins of gold in gold every month during the twelve years covered by the contract. He binds himself to "receive and accept for the said work such sum as may seem good to the aforesaid Overseers, or as they may think fit, over and above the said two broad florins of gold in gold: and even to be content with nothing (*et etiam nihil recipere*), if it shall seem good to the said Overseers." The Overseers bind themselves to furnish him with a workshop, at the corner of the Via de' Pinti, near the Servite Monastery, on a site at that time vacant; and the

building, erected from a design which must be approved by Michelangelo and by Simone del Pollaiuolo on behalf of the Overseers, is to cost at least six hundred broad florins of gold in gold, although any excess over that sum is to be paid by Michelangelo, and not by the Overseers. The six hundred florins, or the house erected with the money are in a sense to be considered as part payment for the twelve statues, for Michelangelo is to acquire a right to a twelfth part of the house for each statue finished : " and if he shall deliver two complete statues [in any year], as above set forth, he shall be understood to acquire, and they [the Consuls and Overseers] are willing that he should acquire, all rights and jurisdiction over one sixth part of the said house ; and the same conditions shall be observed for the remainder of the statues." His salary is to begin from the time of his setting out for Carrara, or if he shall decide not to go, from the day when he shall begin to work on the marble after its delivery in Florence. If he fails to carry out the contract he is liable to a fine of a thousand florins.

On September 15th, 1504, a definite contract was drawn up for the Piccolomini statues. Since the date of the first agreement touching this work, already mentioned, Cardinal Piccolomini, by whose orders it was to have been done, had been raised to the throne of St. Peter as the successor of Alexander VI., assuming the title of Pius III. Pius died within a month of his election, on October 18th, 1503, and was succeeded by Julius II., the Pope for whom Michelangelo dreamed those mighty dreams which were never to come true. After the death of Pius his

heirs wished to carry out the proposed work in the Piccolomini Chapel, and made a contract with Michelangelo for that purpose. The memorandum of May 22nd, 1501, need not be quoted, as it does little more than refer to previous correspondence with the then Cardinal on the subject. The contract made with his heirs on September 15th, 1504, however, is of greater interest, and recites the conditions under which the work was to be done, "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and of the Most Glorious Virgin Mary, Amen," and ratifying a previous agreement made between Michelangelo and the Cardinal.

The statues are to be fifteen in number, "of Carrara marble, new, clean, and white, and free from veins"; and, with certain exceptions afterwards noted, they are to be two *braccia* high. They are to be finished within three years for a sum of three hundred broad ducats of gold to be paid in gold. Michelangelo binds himself to carve figures of "such of the Apostles and Saints as his Most Reverend Lordship shall select, on the right hand and on the left of the chapel, with such draperies, poses, actions and nude portions as are proper to the same; and they shall be of the perfection he has promised, that is to say, of greater excellence, better wrought and finished than any modern statues to be seen in Rome to-day. And as the said fifteen figures are to be executed by him in Florence where neither his Most Reverend Lordship nor any other person of intelligence and skill in such matters will be able to see them or to judge whether they have any defect or

blemish, on behalf of the Cardinal it is stipulated that when the first two statues are finished he may, if he so desire, cause them to be examined by any master skilful in the art he may choose ; and similarly Michelangnolo (*sic*), if he so desire, may appoint any master for a like purpose : this last, in company with the master chosen by the Cardinal, shall judge whether the said two figures are of the promised excellence and perfection of finish ; that is to say, he shall decide whether they are more beautiful, and better wrought and finished than any modern figures to be found in Rome to-day." In case of disagreement the two assessors are to delegate their powers, by common agreement, to a third, whose award is to be binding. Michelangelo is not to undertake any other work in marble which may interfere with the Cardinal's statues during the whole period of three years which the work will require: and before beginning the work he is to go to Siena and measure the recesses the figures are to fill. The Cardinal is to pay the cost of transport from Florence to Siena, but Michelangelo is to place them in position at his own risk and expense. He is also to supply designs showing the disposition of the draperies and other accessories he proposes to adopt. The Cardinal is to advance a hundred ducats for the artist's use, and for this sum Iacopo Gallo makes himself responsible should Michelangelo die before the work is done. Each figure is to be paid for as it is completed, at the rate of thirty-three and a third ducats per figure.

" Item, Michelagnolo shall make the Christ which is to go at the highest point in the Chapel, according to

the design thereof, one palm greater than two *braccia*, to allow for the distance from the eye: similarly, he shall make the Christ which is to go in the great central recess four fingers larger; the St. Thomas and the St. John which are to be beside it shall be two *braccia* in height; the two angels on the extreme ends of the cornice holding trumpets shall be four fingers less than two *braccia*, for Maestro Andrea [Fusina] has judged that they shall so be made." The figures are each to be cut from one block, "and not made up of separate pieces for the head, arms and feet as is often the case." The three years of the contract are to begin from the day the Cardinal shall pay over the said sum of a hundred ducats.

"Item, as there is already a marble St. Francis which was made by Pietro Turrisiani, the Cardinal requests that the said Michelagnolo, seeing that the head and the draperies are yet unfinished, will for the sake of his own honour, and out of courtesy and kindness, finish the same with his own hand in Siena, whither his Most Reverend Lordship shall cause it to be brought in order that it may stand among his other figures. And it shall not appear to be the work of another hand or another master, because if it be faulty the blame will fall upon him [Michelangelo], for all who see it will suppose it to be his work.

"Also, the said Most Reverend Cardinal, when the said figures shall be finished and paid for one by one, each pair having been examined and approved by the assessors in Florence as above described, shall be at liberty to dispose of them as he chooses: and if he wishes he shall be at liberty to remove them from

Michelagnolo's workshop and to place and bestow them wheresoever in Florence shall appear convenient to him, upon application request or demand by him made for the purpose; and this shall be to the end that they may neither be damaged or broken by him [Michelangelo] through jealousy or malice."

The contract is signed by the Cardinal and by Michelangelo, while Iacopo Gallo also subscribes his name in token of his willingness to act as guarantor for the advance of one hundred ducats mentioned in the document. The Pietro Turrisiani mentioned in this contract is Pietro Torrigiano, the Florentine sculptor, who came to England in the reign of Henry VIII. and carved the tomb of Henry VII. in Westminster Abbey.

Only four statues were furnished by the artist, those of St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Pius, and St. Gregory, while the St. Francis begun by Torrigiano and finished by Michelangelo may be considered as a fifth. These first four are referred to in a fresh contract made between Michelangelo and the brothers and heirs of Pius on October 11th, 1504.

The deed begins by citing a contract made between Pius, when still Cardinal of Siena, and Michelangelo, on June 5th, 1501. It states that in spite of the Pope's death his brothers and heirs, Iacopo and Andrea, desire that the work shall still be carried out. There are certain alterations to be made in the agreement: but whereas Michelangelo has already completed four of the statues and delivered them to the heirs of Pius, the said heirs are willing to accept

these figures as being of the agreed quality and excellence, while the artist binds himself to furnish the other eleven which were included in the previous contract within the two years next ensuing.

"Item, whereas the said Michelangelo, by virtue of the said agreement has bound himself to cause marble to be brought to Florence from the mountains of Carrara for the making of the said statues; and whereas, by reason of the besieging of the Pisans within the territory of Pisa, war has once more broken out; and whereas the Florentine Republic may endeavour to divert the course of the River Arno in such wise that the transport of the said marble from the mountains of Carrara to the city of Florence may thereby be hindered; and whereas also the said Michelangelo may fall ill, which God avert: for these reasons the parties to this contract have agreed that if from any of these causes, either because of the diversion of the waters of the said River Arno, or because of the war, or because of illness on the part of the said Michelangelo, the work shall be in any way hindered: then, and under the said circumstances, or either one or other of them occurring, the said period of two years shall be suspended during the time of the said hindrance and for as long as it shall last; and when the said hindrance shall be at an end the said period of time shall again continue to be in force."

The only other stipulation of interest is that Michelangelo, having already visited Siena in order to inspect the positions his statues are to occupy, is excused from a further visit to that city.

The agreement made by Michelangelo for marble for the tomb of Julius is the earliest existing document—the earliest, that is to say, in which Michelangelo is personally involved—in which the tomb is mentioned. It is dated from Carrara, December 10th, 1505, the parties thereto being "Michelagniolo di Lodovico Buonarroti" on the one part and "Guido d'Antonio di Biagio and Matteo di Cucarello da Carrara" on the other part. The latter are to supply sixty loads (*carrate*) of marble, each load being of the usual Carrarese weight, 2,500 *libbre:* "and among the said marbles it is understood that there shall be four large blocks, two weighing eight loads each and two weighing five loads each. And for the two blocks of eight loads each it is agreed that I shall pay thirty-five broad ducats of gold apiece, and for the two blocks of five loads each it is agreed that I shall pay twenty ducats of the same value for each." The remainder of the marble may be of any size up to two loads each piece, to be paid for at the rate of two broad ducats of gold per load. "And it is understood that the whole of the marble as above described, and especially the large blocks, shall be free from cracks and veins, and above all that they shall be white and in no way inferior to that quarried by me in person at Carrara in the aforesaid [same] year."

By the end of the following May Guido and Matteo are to supply thirty loads of the said marble, to include one of the blocks weighing eight loads and one of those weighing five loads: the remainder of the marble is to be delivered by the end of September,

all of it being roughed out to the dimensions which Michelangelo will supply. Then follow the conditions of payment and the giving of guarantees: "and it is agreed that all the stipulations herein contained shall be observed by either party if His Holiness our Lord Pope Julius shall continue to live; for I, the aforesaid Michelagnolo, am employed by, and the said marbles are required for, His Holiness: and if he should live but should not proceed with the work for which I require the said marbles, it is understood that this agreement shall be null and void; and until the time when for any reason soever the said work shall be relinquished I shall be bound to accept, and the aforesaid [Guido and Matteo] shall be bound to supply, marble of good quality and soundness as above described, to the value of the sum they shall have received." Then follow the signatures of the parties to the contract and their witnesses.

Michelangelo's own letters now take up the story of his dealings with Julius and the progress of the tomb.

From Florence, May 2nd, 1506.

To the Florentine, Maestro Guliano da San Gallo, Architect to the Pope, in Rome.

GULIANO (*sic*),—I learn from a letter sent by you that the Pope was angry at my departure, that he is willing to place the money at my disposal and to carry out what was agreed upon between us; also, that I am to come back and fear nothing.

As far as my departure is concerned, the truth is that on Holy Saturday I heard the Pope, speaking at

table with a jeweller and the Master of the Ceremonies, say that he did not want to spend another *baiocco* on stones, whether small or large, which surprised me very much. However, before I set out I asked him for some of the money required for the continuance of my work. His Holiness replied that I was to come back again on Monday: and I went on Monday, and on Tuesday, and on Wednesday, and on Thursday—as His Holiness saw. At last, on the Friday morning, I was turned out, that is to say, I was driven away: and the person who turned me away said he knew who I was, but that such were his orders. Thereupon, having heard those words on the Saturday and seeing them afterwards put into execution, I lost all hope. But this alone was not the whole reason of my departure. There was also another cause, but I do not wish to write about it; enough that it made me think that, if I were to remain in Rome, my own tomb would be prepared before that of the Pope. This is the reason for my sudden departure.

Now you write to me on behalf of the Pope, and in similar manner you will read this letter to the Pope. Give His Holiness to understand that I am more eager to proceed with the work than ever I was before, and that if he really wishes to have this tomb erected it would be well for him not to vex me as to where the work is to be done, provided that within the agreed period of five years it be erected in St. Peter's, on the site he shall choose, and that it be a beautiful work, as I have promised: for I am persuaded that it will be a work without an equal in all the world if it be carried out.

If His Holiness now wishes to proceed, let him deposit the said money here in Florence with a person whose name I will communicate to you. I have a quantity of marble in preparation at Carrara, which I will have sent here, and I will do the same with the marble I have in Rome, although it will entail a considerable loss to me: but I should disregard that if by this means I could obtain permission to carry out the work here. From time to time I would despatch the pieces as they are finished, in such a manner that His Holiness would be as well content as if I were working in Rome—more, indeed, because he would see the completed works without having any anxiety. With regard to the aforesaid money and work, I will bind myself in any way His Holiness may direct, and I will furnish whatever security here in Florence he may require. Let it be what it may, I will give him full security, even though it be the whole of Florence. There is yet one thing I have to add: it is this, that the said work could not possibly be done for the price in Rome, but it could be done here because of the many conveniences which are available, such as could not be had in Rome. Moreover, I should do better work and take more interest in it, because I should not have to think about a number of other things. However, *Guliano mio carissimo*, I beg of you to let me have an answer, and quickly. I have nothing further to add. This 2nd day of May, 1506.

Your Michelagniolo,
Sculptor, in Florence.

When Julius entered Bologna in triumph on November 10th of the same year, Michelangelo, having remained with unshaken purpose in Florence ever since his ill-treatment at the hands of the Pope, repaired thither to receive the Papal pardon. He was then commissioned to model the bronze statue of Julius which for all too short a time stood above the great portal of San Petronio. The following letters date from his sojourn in Bologna.

From Bologna, December 19th, [1506]

To Buonarroto di Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni, in Florence.

Buonarroto,—To-day, this 19th day of December, I have received a letter from thee in which thou recommendest to me Pietro Orlandini [Aldobrandini], asking me to perform what he requires of me. Know that he has written asking me to have a dagger blade made for him, and that he wants it to be of admirable workmanship. However, I do not know how I can serve him quickly and well; one reason being that it is not my craft, and the other that I have no time to attend to it. I will endeavour, nevertheless, to secure that before a month has passed he shall be served to the best of my ability.

I received thy tidings concerning your daily life, and especially the news about Giovansimone. It pleases me that he should enter the same shop as thyself and that he is eager to improve, for I desire to assist him as well as you others; and if God help me, as He has ever done, I hope before Lent is over to

have finished what I have to do here, when I will return to Florence and will assuredly do for you as I promised. With reference to the money which, as thou sayest, Giovansimone wishes to invest in a shop, it seems to me better that he should wait for another four months so that the "flash and the report" may take place simultaneously. I know thou wilt understand my meaning, so I will say no more. Tell him from me to strive towards improvement, and that if, after all, he should want the money of which thou speakest in thy letter, it will have to be withdrawn from my account in Florence, for I have none here to send, as I am receiving but a low price for the work I am doing; moreover, it is very uncertain, and something might easily happen to throw me upon my beam ends. For these reasons I exhort you all to be patient and to wait these few months until I return.

As to Giovansimone's coming here, I do not advise him to come yet, for I live here in a poor room and have bought only one bed, in which four persons have to sleep, so that I have not the means to receive him as he asks. But if he still wishes to come here, let him wait until I have cast the figure I am modelling, when I will send off Lapo and Lodovico, who are helping me, and will despatch a horse for him, so that he may not arrive here like a beast of burden. No more. Pray to God for me that my affairs may go well.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
Sculptor, in Bolognia.

The figure mentioned in this letter is the colossal bronze statue of Julius, as already noted. The Lapo and Lodovico here mentioned come in for some scathing criticism in a later letter. Lapo d'Antonio di Lapo was born in 1465 and died about 1526. In 1505 he carved the tomb of Antonio da Terranova, Spedalingo di Santa Maria Nuova. Lodovico di Guglielmo del Buono was born in 1458, and had learnt the goldsmith's art under Antonio del Pollaiuolo. He was a master of the art of casting, and held a post as superintendent of artillery to the Florentine Republic.

From Bologna, January 22nd, 1507.

To Buonarroto di Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni, in Florence. To be delivered at the shop of Lorenzo Strozzi, Arte della Lana, opposite to the Apothecary, della Palla, near the Porta Rossa.

BUONARROTO,—Some days ago I received a letter from thee, from which I learn that Lodovico has arranged with Francesco about Mona Zanobia's farm. Thou tellest me also that Giovansimone has begun to attend the same shop as thyself, and that he wants to come here to Bolognia. I have not replied before because I have not had time until to-day.

With regard to the above-mentioned farm, thou sayest that Lodovico has entered into an agreement, and that he is going to write to me on the subject. Please understand that if he has written to me I have never received any letter which deals with the matter; please tell him this, therefore, so that he may not

be surprised at receiving no reply to his letter, if he has written one.

I will tell thee my views about Giovansimone, so that thou mayest impart them to him on my behalf. I do not wish him to come here before I have cast the figure I have in hand, and for this I have a sufficient reason, though do not ask me what it is. Enough that as soon as I have cast the figure I will see that he shall come here without fail. It will then be less inconvenient, as I shall be released from the expenses which I have now to bear.

I expect that by the middle of Lent my figure will be ready for casting, and I pray God that it may turn out well; for if it be successful I hope to stand well with this Pope and to receive his favour. If I should cast it at mid-Lent and it should turn out well I hope to be in Florence for the Easter festival, and then I will assuredly do by you as I promised, if ye continue to be diligent.

Tell Piero Aldobrandini that I have entrusted his blade to the best worker in such things I can find, and that he promises to let me have it during the coming week. As soon as I receive it I will send it on, if I consider it satisfactory: if not, I will have another made. Tell him also not to be surprised if I have not served him as quickly as I ought, for I have so little time to spare that I could not do otherwise than I have done.

This twenty-second day of January, 1506.

Michelagniolo di Lodovico Buonarroti,
Sculptor, in Bolognia.

Michelangelo here uses the Florentine computation *ab incarnatione*, instead of the Roman system *a nativitate*, which he generally adopted.

From Rome, January 31st, 1507.

To Lodovico di Lionardo di Buonarrota Simoni, in Florence. To be delivered at the Customs House, Florence.

Most Revered Father,—I learn from one of your letters that the Spedalingo has not yet come back to Florence and that as a consequence you have been unable to conclude the business about the farm as you desired. It has given me annoyance also, for I supposed you had already paid over the money for it. I half suspect that the Spedalingo has gone away on purpose so that he may not have to give up this source of income but may continue to hold both the money and the farm. Please let me know about it, for should matters be as I fear I would take my money from his keeping and place it elsewhere.

As for my affairs here, I should get on all right if only my marbles were to arrive: but I seem to be most unfortunate in this matter, for since I arrived there have not been two fine days in succession. A boat happened to get here some days ago, but it was only by the greatest good fortune that it escaped accident, as the weather was most unfavourable: and as soon as I had unloaded it the river suddenly rose in flood and submerged it [the marble], so that even

now I have not been able to set to work on anything, although I make promises to the Pope and encourage him to hope in order that he may not lose his temper with me ; hoping myself all the time that the weather will improve and that I shall soon be able to begin work—God grant it so !

Please take all the drawings, that is to say, all those papers I put into the sack of which I told you, and make them up into a little bundle and send them to me by some carrier. But see that they are securely done up and run no risk of damage from rain, so that not even the smallest paper may suffer hurt. Bid the carrier take good care of them, for some are of the very greatest importance. Write and say into whose charge you have given them and what I have to pay the man.

As to Michele, I wrote to say that he was to put that chest in safety somewhere under cover and then come immediately to Rome where he should want for nothing. I do not know what he has done. I beg of you to enquire into this; and, further, I beg of you to put yourself to a little trouble over these two things—that is to say, first to see that the chest is put in a safe place under cover, and afterwards I would like you to have the marble Madonna brought to your house, and take care that nobody shall see it. I am not sending you any money for these two things because I do not think they will cost much. If you have to borrow, you can do so, because very soon—if my marble arrives—I will send you money for this purpose and for your own use.

I wrote asking you to enquire of Bonifazio the name of the man in Lucca to whom he was going to pay those fifty ducats I am sending to Matteo di Cucherello at Carrara, and I asked you to write the name in the unsealed letter I sent you, which you were to forward to the said Matteo at Carrara so that he might know where to go in Lucca in order to get the money. I expect you have already done this. I beg you also to tell me to whom Bonifazio is paying the money at Lucca, so that I may know his name and can write to Matteo at Carrara telling him from whom he is to receive the said money in Lucca. No more. Do not send me anything more than I write for: my clothes and shirts I give to you and to Giovansimone. Pray to God that my affairs may prosper, and bear in mind that I wish you to invest about a thousand ducats of my money in land, as we have agreed.

On the thirty-first day of January, one thousand five hundred and six.

Your Michelagniolo,
in Rome.

P.S.—Lodovico: I beg you to send on the enclosed letter addressed to Piero d'Argiento, and I beg you to see that he receives it. I think it might be well to send it through the medium of the Jesuits, as he visits them frequently. I beg you to see to this.

The Michele mentioned in this letter is Michele di Piero di Pippo, a stone cutter of Settignano, who was

sent to Carrara in connection with the marbles for the façade of San Lorenzo in Florence. With regard to the "Madonna" mentioned further on, it is not certain whether Michelangelo refers to the marble bas-relief now preserved in the Casa Buonarroti in Florence or to the Madonna and Child which is the chief treasure of Nôtre Dame at Bruges. In passing, it may be worth while to draw attention to the obvious nervousness which marks all Michelangelo's financial transactions. The instructions with regard to the banker at Lucca are characteristic, and afford sufficient proof of the artist's aversion to trusting his money in the hands of other people.

Bologna, February 1st, 1507.

To Buonarroto di Lodovico Simone,
in Florence.

Buonarroto,—I learn from thy letters how matters have gone with regard to the small farm: it has given me the greatest satisfaction and I am well pleased, provided it is a sure thing.

I have made careful enquiries about this Baronciello business, and from what I have heard it is a far more serious thing than ye make it out to be: and for my part, seeing that it is unfair, I would not ask it of him. We are all of us under considerable obligation to Baronciello, and we will do our best to fulfil those obligations, especially such as lie in our power.

Thou must know that on Friday evening, at the twenty-first hour, Pope Julius came to my house where I am at work, and remained for about half an hour while I was working. Then he gave me his blessing

Photo Anderson

POPE JULIUS II

After the picture by Raphael in the Pitti Gallery

and went away, showing himself well satisfied with what I am doing. For all this it seems to me we ought to thank God very heartily; and so I beg you to do, and to pray for me.

I have to inform thee further that on Friday morning I sent away Lapo and Lodovico, who were with me. I turned Lapo away because he was conspiring against me and is a rogue, and would not do as he was bid. Lodovico is better, and I would have kept him on for another two months; but Lapo, in order not to be the only one blamed, corrupted him in such a way that both have been sent off. I tell thee this not because I am troubled by them—for they are not worth three *quattrini* the two together—but so that, if they come to talk to Lodovico, he should not be surprised. Tell him on no account to listen to them: if thou desirest to know more go to Messer Agniolo, Herald of the Signoria, for I have sent him a full account of the matter, and he of his kindness will give thee all information.

I note what thou sayest about Giovansimone. It pleases me that he should enter thy master's shop and endeavour to make progress: encourage him to do his best, for if this matter turns out well I have hopes of placing you in a good position, if ye are prudent. With reference to that other land beside Mona Zanobia's, if Lodovico likes it tell him to enquire into the matter and let me know. I believe, and it is said here, that the Pope will go hence about Carnival.

On the first day of February, 1506 [1507].

MICHELAGNIOLO DI LODOVICO DI BUONARROTA SIMONI,
Sculptor, in Bolognia.

From Bologna.

To Lodovico di Lionardo di Buonarrotta Simoni,
in Florence.

The 8th day of February, 1506 [1507].

Most Revered Father,—I have to-day received a letter from you, from which I learn that Lapo and Lodovico have been talking to you. I am content that you should rebuke me, because I deserve to be rebuked as a wretch and a transgressor quite as much as anyone else, and perhaps more. But you must understand that I have not transgressed in any wise in the matter for which you rebuke me, either against them or against anyone else, unless it be that I have done more than I ought. All the men with whom I have ever had dealings know very well what I give them; and if anyone knows it, Lapo and Lodovico are the two who know it best of all, for in a month and a half one of them has had twenty-seven broad ducats and the other eighteen broad ducats, each with their expenses. Therefore I beg of you not to be carried away by their story. When they complained about me you ought to have asked how long they were with me and how much they had received from me: then you would have had to ask them what cause they had for complaint. But the reason of their great anger, particularly of that rascal Lapo, is this: they had given it out on all sides that they were the men who were doing this work, or rather, that they were in partnership with me; and they never realised —Lapo in particular—that he was not the master until I sent him off. Only then did he understand that he was in my service; and having already given

a great deal of trouble and caused the Pope's favour to show signs of declining, it appeared a strange thing to him that I should drive him away like a beast. I am sorry that he should still have seven ducats of mine, but when I return to Florence he shall most assuredly pay me back, though if he has any conscience he would also feel obliged to give me back the other money he has received. But enough. I shall say no more about it as I have written a sufficiently full account of their performances to Messer Agniolo [the Herald]. I beg you to go to him, and if you can take Granaccio with you, do so, and let him read the letter I have written so that he may understand what abject creatures they are. But I beg of you to keep silent as to what I have written about Lodovico, for if I cannot find any one else to come here and cast the metal I shall endeavour to get him back, because as a matter of fact I have not dismissed him; only Lapo, who received more blame than he cared to support alone, lightened his own load by corrupting Lodovico. You will learn the whole matter from the Herald, and also how you are to act. Do not have any dealings with Lapo, for he is too great a scoundrel, and we have nothing to do with either of them.

With reference to Giovansimone, it does not seem to me advisable that he should come here, as the Pope is leaving during Carnival; I believe he will visit Florence on the way, and he does not leave affairs here in good order. According to rumour, there is a want of confidence prevalent here which it is wise neither to inquire into nor to write about: but enough that, even if nothing were to happen—and I believe

nothing will—I do not want to have the care of brothers on my shoulders. Do not be surprised at this and do not breathe a word of it to anyone, because I have need of assistants, and I should find none willing to come if this were known. And besides, I still think things may turn out well. I shall soon be back in Florence and I will behave in such a manner as to satisfy Giovansimone and the others, if it please God! To-morrow I will write you another letter with reference to certain moneys I wish to send to Florence, telling you what to do with them. I understand about Piero; he will answer on my behalf, for he is a good fellow, as he has always been.

Your MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Bolognia.

[P.S.] I have something else to add in reply to the curious behaviour Lapo attributes to me. I want to tell you one thing, and it is this. I bought seven hundred and twenty pounds of wax, and before I bought it I told Lapo to find out where it could be got, and to settle the price, saying that I would give him the money so that he could buy it. Lapo went, and came back again, and told me that it could not be got for a farthing less than nine broad ducats and twenty *bolognini* the hundred [pounds], which is equal to nine ducats forty *soldi*. He added that I ought to take the opportunity without delay because I had been very fortunate. I replied that he was to go and find out whether he could get the odd forty *soldi* per hundred knocked off and that I would then buy it. He answered that the Bolognesi were of such a nature that they would not abate one farthing of the price

they had asked. This raised my suspicions, and I let the matter drop. Later in the same day I called Piero aside and told him secretly to go and ask the price of the wax per hundred. Piero went to the same man as Lapo and bargained with him for eight and a half ducats, to which price I agreed, and afterwards I sent Piero to receive his commission, and he got that also. This is one of my strange performances. Of a truth I know it seemed strange to him that I was able to see through his deceit. It was not enough for him to receive eight broad ducats a month and his expenses, but in addition he tried to swindle me; and he may have swindled me on many occasions of which I know nothing, for I trusted him. I have never met a man who appeared more honest, so I suppose his straightforward look must have misled many another person. Therefore do not trust him in anything, and pretend not to see him.

The Francesco Granaccio mentioned here was a painter and a fellow-student with Michelangelo in the workshop of Domenico Ghirlandaio. He studied also with Michelangelo in the Medici Garden at San Marco.

From Bologna, February 13th, 1507.

To Buonarroto di Lodovico Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

Buonarroto,—I send this as cover to two letters; one is to go to Piero Aldobrandini, and the other to Giovanni Balducci in Rome. The latter I wish thee to hand to Bonifazio Fazi so that he may send it on, the other give to the aforesaid Piero.

Concerning those two scoundrels, I have no time to tell the whole story of their knavery, and I beg all of you—and tell Lodovico the same—not to refer to their behaviour in any way, for we have not to deal with them in this matter. Let this suffice.

The thirteenth day of February, 1506.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Bolognia.

From Bologna, February 24th, [1507].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

BUONARROTO,—It is already fifteen days since I sent certain moneys to Lodovico in Florence with certain instructions, and I have never had a reply. I am much surprised at it. Tell Lodovico, therefore, to let me know if he has received them, and if he has done as I asked; tell him to let me know without fail, because I am annoyed about it and marvel at his want of perception. He is the sort of man that one would entrust with important business again! I should have expected him to write a hundred letters, to make sure that at least one should reach me. See to it that he informs me without fail as to what steps he has taken and that the letter is sent in such a way as to reach me.

Yesterday I sent to see if Piero's dagger was finished and found that it had still to be gilt. The man has kept me waiting for a month, but the truth is that he was not able to do otherwise, for owing to the departure of the Court he has had to supply weapons to all the courtiers and has had a very great deal to do. It

is for this reason he has kept me waiting. Tell Piero not to be anxious, for in any case he shall have it in a few days. The Pope went away on Monday morning at the sixteenth hour, and if thou desirest to learn in what state he has left my affairs, go to the Herald and he will tell thee. I have no time to write.

The twenty-fourth day of February.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Bolognia.

From Bologna, March 6th, 1507.

To Buonarroto di Lodovico Buonarroti,
in Florence.

BUONARROTO,—I did not reply to thy letter or to Piero Aldobrandini's because I had decided not to write until I had received the said Piero's dagger. It is now two months ago that I entrusted this work to a man who has the reputation of being he most skilful master to be found in his particular craft, and although he has kept me waiting until now I did not wish to have it made by anyone else, nor to annul the agreement: wherefore, the aforesaid Piero has some excuse if he considers I have treated him badly, but I could not do otherwise.

Now I have got the dagger back again, or rather, I have got it; but only this morning, and with much difficulty, for my lad Piero had been obliged to go for it so many times that he was ready to beat the maker over the head with it. Please note that the gold-beater, Chiaro di Bartolomeo, will be the bearer of this and that he will also bring the dagger. See that Chiaro is paid what is due for bringing it, and give it

to Piero. If it does not please him, tell him to send me word, and I will have another one made; and tell him also that since the Court came here every craftsman and all the arts have risen to great dignity and esteem, wherefore he must not marvel if I have so long delayed sending it, for I, too, have had much to think of. This one workman alone has more on his hands since the Court was here than the whole of Bolognia had previously. I have no time for writing. I wrote to Lodovico saying I had received his letters and telling him how I had been deceived, as he will now be able to understand.

On the sixth day of March, 1506.

MICHELAGNIOLO DI LODOVICO BUONARROTI,
in Bolognia.

From Bologna, March 26th, [1507].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

BUONARROTO,—Some days ago I received a letter from thee acquainting me with the whole story of Piero Aldobrandini and the dagger. I may tell thee that if it were not for love of thee I would leave him to babble on as long as he liked. Thou must know that the blade I sent, and thou hast received, was made according to his—that is to say, Piero's—measurements, for he sent me a drawing in a letter and told me that I was to get it made exactly like that. I did so. However, if he wanted a dagger he should not have sent me measurements for a rapier: but I wish to tell thee in this letter what I would not say before, and that is, that thou hadst better not have

dealings with him because it is not thy business. If he should come to thee for the aforesaid blade, by no means let him have it; put a good face on the matter and tell him I gave it to one of my friends: that will be enough. I may tell thee that it cost me nineteen *carlini* here, with thirteen *quattrini* for the tax.

My affairs here are proceeding favourably, by the grace of God, and I hope to cast my figure before a month is past. Pray God, therefore, that it may turn out well, so that I may return quickly to you, for I am minded to do for you all as I promised. Be kind to Giovansimone and tell him to write to me sometimes, and say to Lodovico that I am well and that I will certainly let him know before I cast my figure. Commend me to Granaccio when thou seest him. I have nothing more to tell thee. The plague is beginning here, and is of a virulent type, for wherever it enters it carries off all within the house, although at present it has not claimed many victims—forty households, perhaps, so they tell me.

This twenty-sixth day of March.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
Sculptor, in Bolognia.

P.S.—If thou hast given the dagger to Piero say no more about it, but if thou hast not done so do not give it him at all.

Much to Michelangelo's satisfaction, Piero refused the dagger, which enabled the artist to give it to Filippo Strozzi, who had admired it.

From Bologna, April 20th, [1507].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

BUONARROTO,—To-day I have received thy letter of the 17th of April, from which I learn the long journey my letters have to make before reaching Florence. I cannot alter it, because the arrangements are bad. I have learnt many things from thy letter, but I do not reply to them because there is no need. I am sorry thou hast behaved to Filippo Strozzi in so miserly a fashion over so small a matter [*i.e.*, the dagger], but since it is done it cannot be undone.

With regard to my own affairs, I am writing to Giovansimone and he will tell thee how I prosper: say the same to Lodovico.

I would like thee to go to the Herald and tell him that as I have never received a reply from him with reference to Messer Bernardino I have concluded that the said Messer Bernardino is unwilling to come here for fear of the pestilence; wherefore I have engaged a Frenchman to take his place, who will serve me well. I did this because I could not wait any longer. Please let this be known, that is to say, tell Messer Agniolo [the Herald]. Commend me to him, and tell him to commend me to his lordship the Gonfaloniere [Piero Soderini]. Commend me to Giovanni da Ricasoli when thou seest him.

The twentieth day of April.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Bolognia.

The Messer Bernardino is Bernardino d'Antonio dal Ponte di Milano, superintendent of artillery to the Florentine Republic from 1504 to 1512. He took Lodovico di Guglielmo del Buono's place with Michelangelo, and cast the figure of Julius.

From Bologna, April 20th, [1507].

To Giovan Simone di Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni, in Florence.

GIOVAN SIMONE,—I have not replied to a letter received from thee several days ago because I have not had the time. In this letter I have to tell thee that up to the present my work goes well, and accordingly I have hopes that it will finish satisfactorily—please God it may be so! And if it should be so—that is to say, if I come out of this affair well—I will come, or rather, return, to you immediately, and I will do all that I have promised each one of you; that is to say, I will help you with all I have—in what way you and our father will be able to judge for yourselves. Therefore be of good cheer, and be diligent in thy shop, making the most of every opportunity; for I hope that before long ye will be keeping a shop by yourselves and for yourselves. If ye understand the business and know how to trade it will be of very great assistance. Wherefore attend to thy work with diligence.

Thou writest of a certain friend of thine, a doctor, who has told thee that the plague is a dangerous disease and that people die of it. I am very glad to know of this because it is very prevalent here and these Bolognesi have not yet learnt that it is fatal. Wherefore it would be a good thing if he were to come

here, because then he would perhaps teach them by experience, and they would greatly benefit thereby. I have nothing more to tell thee. I am well and getting on satisfactorily: I hope soon to be back in Florence. On the 20th day of April.

I had no more paper.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Bolognia.

Giovan Simone Buonarroti was born on March 11th, 1479. He was four years younger than Michelangelo.

From Bologna, April 28th, [1507].

To Giovan Simone di Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni, in Florence. To be delivered at the shop of Lorenzo Strozzi, Arte della Lana, in Porta Rossa.

GIOVAN SIMONE,—I have already replied to a letter from thee some days ago. By this time I believe thou wilt have received mine and wilt have learnt my views. If thou hast not received it, thou wilt learn from this letter all that I wrote to thee in the last.

I expect Buonarroto will have told thee of my intentions, and thou mayst take it all for settled, for directly I reach Florence, I intend, with God's permission, to set you up in business either by yourselves or in partnership, whichever ye desire, and in whatever manner may appear to us the most secure. Wherefore be of good courage and rely upon what I have told thee as being a certainty. I have no time now for writing; therefore I will write again more fully later on. I am well and have finished my figure in

wax. This coming week I shall begin to make the outer mould, and expect to have it complete in from twenty to twenty-five days. After that I shall prepare for the casting, and if it comes out well I shall be in Florence shortly after.

On the 28th day of April.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Bolognia.

From Bologna, May 2nd, [1507].

To Giovan Simone di Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

GIOVAN SIMONE,—Some days ago I received a letter from thee which gave me much pleasure. Since then I have written thee two letters, and I suppose I have had the same good fortune with respect to them that I usually have, that is to say, I suppose they have not arrived.

I may tell thee that, please God, two months will not pass before I return to Florence: and all that I have promised to do for Buonarroto and for thee I am prepared to carry out. I do not write to thee of my intentions at full length, nor do I say how eager I am to help you, because I am loath that others should get to know of our affairs: be of good cheer, however, for greater—or rather, better—things are in store for thee than thou thinkest. I have no more to tell thee on this head. Thou must know that here everyone is preparing for war, and this is the fourth day that the whole district has been under arms and a prey to rumoured dangers, with which the Church in especial is threatened: the cause of it being the Bentivogli,

who have made an attempt to enter the city with a great following of people. The high courage and prudence of his lordship the Legate, however, and the admirable precautions he has taken have, I believe, saved the patrimony from them once more, since at the twenty-third hour this evening we had news from their forces that they were turning back again with small honour to themselves. No more. Pray God for me: and live in happy expectation, because soon I shall be back in Florence.

The 2nd day of May.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Bolognia.

The Bentivogli, sometime lords of Bologna, had been driven out by the Papal forces, and it was as a result of this reoccupation that Julius visited the city, as related in Michelangelo's letters. Shortly after the Pope's departure, however, Annibale Bentivoglio made the attempt to which this letter refers, but was repulsed by the Papal Legate, the Cardinal di Pavia.

Bologna, July 6th, [1507].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni, in Florence.

BUONARROTO,—Learn that we have cast my statue, and that I was not over fortunate with it, the reason being that Maestro Bernardino, either through ignorance or misfortune, failed to melt the metal sufficiently. It would take too long to explain how it happened: enough that my figure has come out up to the waist, the remainder of the metal—half the

bronze, that is to say—having caked in the furnace, as it had not melted; and to get it out the furnace must be taken to pieces. I am having this done, and this week I shall have it built up again. Next week I shall recast the upper portion and finish filling the mould, and I believe it will turn out tolerably well after so bad a beginning, though only as the result of the greatest labour, worry and expense. I was ready to believe that Maestro Bernardino could melt his metal without fire, so great was my confidence in him: but all the same it is not that he is not a skilled master, or that he did not work with a will. But he who tries may fail. His failure has been costly to him as well as to me, for he has disgraced himself to such an extent that he dare not raise his eyes in Bologna.

If thou shouldst meet Baccio d'Agnolo, read this letter to him and beg him to inform San Gallo in Rome, and commend me to him. Commend me also to Giovanni da Ricasoli and to Granaccio. If this turns out satisfactorily I hope to be finished with it in from fifteen to twenty days, when I will return to you. If it is not successful I should perhaps have to do it again, but I will keep you informed.

Let me know how Giovansimone is.

On the 6th day of July.

[P.S.] With this I shall enclose a letter for Giuliano da San Gallo in Rome. Send it as securely and as quickly as thou canst: if he should be in Florence, give it into his hands.

From Bologna, October [16th], 1507.

To Buonarroto di Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

BUONARROTO,—I have no time to reply to thy last letter as it deserves, but thou mayst learn that I am well and shall soon have finished, and expect to win very great honour; all of which proceedeth from the grace of God. Directly I have completed my work I shall come to Florence, and then I will deal in such a way with all the matters of which thou writest that ye shall be satisfied, and Lodovico and Giovansimone as well. I pray thee go and seek out the Herald and the Commandant Tommaso [Balducci]: tell them I have not time to write, or rather, to reply to their very welcome letters; but that by the next post I will assuredly write something to them by way of reply. Also I beg thee to seek out San Gallo, and to tell him that I expect to have finished soon. Find out how he is, and tell him that by the next post I will write and inform him how the work is going on. No more.

The — day of October.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Bolognia.

From Bologna, November 10th, [1507].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

BUONARROTO,—I marvel that thou writest to me so seldom. I am sure thou hast more leisure for writing to me than I have for writing to thee, so let me have news from thee frequently.

Thy last letter informed me that thou hadst good

reason to wish for my speedy return, with the result that for several days I was uneasy in my mind. Therefore, when thou writest, write boldly and explain matters clearly so that I may understand them. Let this suffice.

Know that I look forward to my early return far more eagerly than ye could possibly do, for I live here in the greatest discomfort, subject to the greatest anxieties, and do nothing but labour day and night. I have undergone and am undergoing so much strain that, if I were obliged to make another figure, I do not believe my life would suffice for it, as the undertaking has been one of enormous difficulty; had it been entrusted to anyone else it would have turned out a failure. But I believe the intercessions of somebody or other have assisted me and kept me in health, for all Bologna was of opinion that I should never complete it: both since it was cast and before, when there was no one who believed the casting would ever take place. However, it is now well on the way to completion, though it will not be finished by the end of this month as I had expected; but next month it will certainly be off my hands, and I will return to Florence. So be of good cheer, all of ye, for I will do as I promised, whatever happens. Cheer Lodovico and Giovansimone in my name and let me know how Giovansimone is getting on: strive to learn and acquire a knowledge of the business, so that when the time comes ye may know how to trade for yourselves, which will be before long.

On the tenth day of November.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Bolognia.

From Bologna, February 18th, [1508].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

BUONARROTO,—It is now a fortnight since I expected to be back in Florence, for I thought these people would place my statue in position directly it was finished. Now they are dilly-dallying with me and doing nothing with the statue, while I meanwhile have orders from the Pope not to go away before it is in position, so that I shall be detained still further. I shall stay here until the end of this week and see what they do about it, and if by then no instructions have been given I shall come away at all hasards, despite the orders I have received.

I enclose with this a letter directed to the Cardinal di Pavia, in which I have related all that has occurred so that he may have no cause for complaint. Put it in a cover and send it to Giuliano da San Gallo for me, begging him to deliver it into the Cardinal's own hand.

This letter is not signed. The statue was raised three days after the despatch of this letter, February 21st, 1508, but was destroyed when the Bentivogli returned to power some three years later. Michelangelo had not long to wait before Julius again employed him, this time as a painter. The following note of the paintings in the Sistine Chapel occurs in the *Ricordi*, under date of May 10th, 1508:—

"I record that on this tenth day of May, in the year one thousand five hundred and eight, I, Michelagniolo, sculptor, have received from his Holiness, our

Mansell, Photo

THE DEPOSITION

From the unfinished picture by Michelangelo in the National Gallery

lord Pope Julius the Second, five hundred ducats of the Camera, which were paid to me by Messer Carlino, Chamberlain, and by Messer Carlo degli Albizzi, on account of the paintings in the vault of the Chapel of Pope Sixtus, on which I begin to work this day, under the conditions and stipulations set forth in the document prepared by His Most Reverend Lordship of Pa[via] and subscribed by my hand.

"For the assistant painters who are to come from Florence, who will be five in number, twenty gold ducats of the Camera each, with this proviso: that is to say, when they have arrived and have entered into an agreement with us, the aforesaid twenty ducats which each will have received shall be reckoned as part of their wages, these wages to be due as from the day of their departure from Florence. And if they shall not enter into an agreement with us, they are to retain one-half of the said sum for the expenses of their journey and for their time."

From Rome, [June, 1508].

To Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

DEAREST FATHER,—I learn from your last letter that I am reported in Florence to be dead, though this is of little importance, as I am still alive. However, let them say what they list, and do not speak of me to any one, because they are evil-minded. I keep at my work as much as possible. I have received no money from the Pope for the last thirteen months but I expect to have some without fail within the next

month and a half, as I have made very good use of what I have already received. Should he not give me any I shall be obliged to borrow in order to return to you, as I have not a farthing. There is one good thing about it, I cannot be robbed. May God ordain things for the best!

I learn what you tell me about Mona Cassandra, but I do not know what to say. If I had any money I would find out whether I could have the lawsuit tried here without loss to myself—I mean loss of time. You would have to send me a power of attorney, and to guarantee me against further expense. When the time comes let me know how the matter is progressing, and if you have any need of money, go to the Spedalingo at Santa Maria Nuova, as I have already told you. I have nothing more to say. I live here in a state of dissatisfaction; not over well, and working very hard; with no one to look after me and no money. However, my hope is steadfast that God will help me. Commend me to Giovanni da Ricasoli and to Messere Agniolo the Herald.

Your Michelagniolo,
in Rome.

Mona Cassandra was the widow of Michelangelo's uncle, Francesco Buonarroti, who died on June 18th, 1508. Cassandra was bringing an action against her brother-in-law, Lodovico, and his children, for the recovery of her dowry, although it appears that they had already renounced all claims to it.

From Rome, [July, 1508].

To Giovan Simone di Lodovico Buonarroti,
in Florence.

Giovan Simone,—They say that he who does good to a good man makes him better, and that he who does good to a rogue makes him worse. For many years past I have striven, by dint of good words and kind actions, to lead thee to live a virtuous life in peace with thy father and the rest of us, but each day thou growest more unworthy. I will not say thou art a rogue, but thy conduct is such that it gives satisfaction neither to me nor to the rest of the family. There is much I might write to thee concerning thy manner of life, but it would only be the same waste of words as on former occasions. And so, to be brief, I tell thee as a truth that thou possessest nothing whatsoever in this world, that thy maintenance and lodging are at my expense, and that for the love of God I have entirely supported thee in the past, believing that thou wert my own brother, as the others are. But now of a surety I know thou art no brother of mine, else thou wouldst not have threatened my father—indeed, thou art no more than a beast, and as a beast I will treat thee. Learn from me that he who sees his father threatened or abused is bound to risk his own life in his defence; and let this suffice. I repeat, thou hast nothing in the world: and if I hear the least complaint against thy conduct I will come to Florence post haste, to show thee the extent of thine error, and to teach thee not to waste thy substance nor to set fire to houses and farms thou hast not earned. Thou art not yet where thou

thinkest thyself to be. If I am obliged to come I will show thee something that will make thee weep hot tears and cause thee to recognise the false foundations of thine arrogance.

This further I have to add: if thou wilt give thyself to honest living and wilt honour and reverence thy father, I will help thee as I am helping the others, and before long I will establish thee in a suitable shop. If thou wilt not conduct thyself as I have said, I will come and settle thy business in such a manner that thou shalt know thyself better than ever thou didst before, and thou shalt learn what it is thou canst call thine own, and wilt have it proclaimed wherever thou goest. No more. Where words fail me I will make up with deeds.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

[P.S.]—I cannot send off this letter without adding a couple of lines. I wish to tell thee that for the last twelve years I have wandered miserably through Italy; I have supported every shame, suffered every hardship, worn out my body with every toil, and risked life itself a thousand times for the single purpose of assisting my family. Now that I have begun to raise it up a little, it is thou, and thou alone, who desirest in a single hour to destroy and pull down all that I have spent so many years and so much labour in building up. By the Body of Christ, but this shall not be! I am ready to wipe away ten thousand men such as thou art whenever it be necessary. And now, be wise, and vex not to wrath one who has other causes for anxiety.

From Rome, [August, 1508].

To Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

Most Revered Father,—From your last letter I have learnt how matters stand with you and how Giovansimone behaves himself. I have never received worse news during the last ten years than on the evening I read your letter, for I thought I had arranged everything for them in such a manner that they would be able to make their shop a success with the assistance I had promised them, and that with my promises in view they would make the most of their opportunity and learn all they could, so that when the proper time came they would be able to carry on business profitably. Now I see that they intend to do nothing of the sort, particularly Giovansimone: wherefore I perceive that it is quite useless to assist them. Had I been able, the self-same day that I received your letter would have seen me on horseback, and by now I would have put everything right. But as I was prevented from doing that I have written him a letter such as I think necessary; and if from this day forth he does not change in character—or rather, if ever he takes from the house so much as the value of a pin, or does aught else to displease you—I beg you to send me word: then I will obtain leave of absence from the Pope, and will come to Florence to show him the mistake he is making. I wish you to believe that all the labours to which I have unceasingly given myself have been undertaken no less on your behalf than on my own, and all that I have bought has been bought so that

you might benefit thereby while you live: for had you not been living I should never have bought it. And so, if it please you to let the house and to let the farm on a lease, deal with it as though it were entirely your own, and with the money you receive from this transaction, added to what I will myself give you, you will be able to live like a gentleman. If the summer were not so near at hand I would advise you to conclude the business at once and come to live here with me. But there is no time, because you would not live long in the summer we have here. I thought of realising the money invested in the shop and giving it to Gismondo, so that he and Buonarroto together may do the best with it they can, and that you meanwhile should let the houses and the farm at Pazzolatica: the rent, added to the money I will send you, would enable you to choose some retreat, either in Florence or near by, where you would be comfortable, and could engage somebody to look after you, leaving that scoundrel to shift for himself (*col culo i' mano*). I beg of you to think only of yourself in all you do, for my single object is to assist you in every way possible. Think it over.

With regard to Cassandra's affairs, I have taken advice as to going to law about it here. I am told that it would cost three times as much here as in Florence; and it is perfectly true, for what can be done there for a *grosso* could not be done here for two *carlini*. The other [reason] is that I have no friend to entrust with this affair, and I could not look after it myself. It seems to me that, if you wish to go to law about it, you should proceed by the

usual methods, as is reasonable, taking care to protect yourself by every means in your power. For the expenses to be incurred, I will not fail you as long as I have money to spend. Be as little fearful as you can, for these are not cases in which life itself is endangered. Nothing more. As I have already said, let me hear your views.

Your MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

The date of August, 1508, as given by Milanesi, is here adhered to, though it is more likely that the letter was written earlier in the year, in view of Michelangelo's remark that the summer is near at hand. By August the summer would be drawing to a close.

From Rome, [August, 1508].

To Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

MOST REVERED FATHER,—I have just lately received a letter from a nun who says she is our aunt, and recommends herself to me, saying she is very poor and in very great want, asking me to give her something. Enclosed I send you five broad ducats: for the love of God please give her four ducats and a half, and the half ducat that remains I beg you to give to Buonarroto so that he may buy an ounce of lake from Francesco Granacci or from some other painter, or as much as the money will buy. It must be of the best obtainable in Florence: if there is none of the best quality to be got, then do

not get any at all. The nun I have spoken of, our aunt, belongs, I believe, to the Convent of San Giuliano. I beg of you to find out whether she is really in such dire distress, because she writes to me through a channel I do not like: wherefore I doubt whether it be not some other nun who has made her do this. If you find the story is not true, keep the money for yourself. It will be paid to you by Bonifazio Fazi.

I have nothing else to tell you at present as I have not yet decided on anything of which I can advise you. I will let you know all in due course.

Your MICHELAGNIOLO,
Sculptor, in Rome.

From Rome, November 5th, [1508].

To Lodovico di Lionardo di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

MOST REVERED FATHER,—I understand from your last letter that you gave Michele's mother and his wife six *staia* of grain, worth twenty-five *soldi* the *staio*, and that you are prepared to give them what you can, according to their needs. I tell you that you are not to give them anything more: if they should ask for more you are to reply that you have nothing to give until you hear from me.

You say you are sending my clothes soon: I beg of you to do so, and to write telling me what expenses you have incurred, so that without delay I may send you the money for the grain and for these at the same time. Make out the account according to the dictates of your own conscience. As soon as I receive

it I will send you an order for the money, and we will do what we have already discussed in writing.

I should be glad if you would enquire whether some lad could be found in Florence, the son of poor but respectable people, used to hard work, and willing to come here and stay with me. I should want him to do all the housework, that is to say, the shopping and running the necessary errands; and whatever spare time he might have could be devoted to learning. If you should find such a boy, let me know, for here there are only rascals to be got, and I am very much in need of someone to keep the house. Nothing more. I am well, thank God, and working hard.

On the fifth day of November.

Your MICHELAGNIOLO,
Sculptor, in Rome.

From Rome, January 27th, [1509].

To Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

DEAREST FATHER,—I have to-day received a letter from you, and when I read it I was very much disturbed. I doubt that you are more timid and fearful than the occasion warrants. I wish you would tell me what you think he could do—the worst that could happen, that is, if he were to push matters to extremes. I have no more to say about it. It grieves me that you should be possessed by this fear; wherefore I counsel you to be well prepared against his efforts, take wise advice, and then think no more of the matter: for supposing he were to seize all you have in the world, you would not go short of comforts

and the means of subsistence, even if there were none other left to you but myself. Therefore be of good cheer. I am still in great perplexity, for it is now a year since I received the last *grosso* from this Pope, and I do not ask for any money because my work (*) is not progressing in such a manner as, in my opinion, to merit it. The cause lies in the difficulty of the work and the fact that it is not my profession. Thus I am wasting time fruitlessly. God help me! If you are in need of money, go to the Spedalingo and ask him for any sum up to fifteen ducats, and let me know how much remains. Iacopo [l'Indaco], that painter I brought here, has left to-day; and as he has been complaining about me here I suppose he will complain in Florence also. Just lend him "the merchant's ear"—that will be enough; for he has committed a thousand errors and I have every reason to complain of him. Take no notice of him. Tell Buonarroto that I will answer his letter later on.

This twenty-seventh day of January.

Your MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

From Rome, June, 1509.

To Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

MOST REVERED FATHER,—Some days ago I sent you a hundred broad ducats of the money I was keeping here for my expenses of living and working, and this I did because I think the money is safer in Florence, than here. I expect you have received it.

(*) The painting of the Sistine Chapel.

I beg you to take it to the Spedalingo and tell him to place it to my account with the other money. I have now eighty ducats left here, which I think will maintain me for four months, and I have still six months work to do before I shall receive any money from the Pope. Of a surety, therefore, I shall be in want of money, and I think I shall require another fifty ducats. I beg, therefore, that of the hundred ducats you have promised to pay back to me, you will let me have have fifty: the remainder I give to you on condition that within four months the money is ready without fail, because I shall have need of it here. I want to save the hundred I am sending to Florence in order to pay them to the heirs of the Cardinal of Siena, for otherwise, as you know, this sum must be withdrawn from my funds in Santa Maria Nuova. I beg of you to buy a farm without fail, because I hear that they are to be had cheap. When my painting here is finished I shall be entitled to receive a thousand ducats from the Pope, and if it turns out well I hope to be paid without fail. Pray to God therefore for the Pope and for us.

Write to me quickly.

This — day of June.

Your MICHELAGNIOLO,
Sculptor, in Rome.

The hundred ducats is the sum that had been advanced by the Cardinal's heirs as set forth in the contract (see p. 11). As Michelangelo did not complete the eleven remaining figures he was called upon to repay the money advanced.

From Rome, [1509].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico Simoni,
in Florence.

BUONARROTO,—From thy last letter I learn that ye are all well and that Lodovico has another post. All this pleases me well, and I urge him to accept it if it be of such a nature as would allow him to return to his place in Florence, should that be necessary. Matters with me are going as usual, and by the end of this week I shall have completed my painting; that is to say, the part of it I had begun. I expect to receive my money when I have uncovered it, and I will try once more to get permission to come to you for a month. I do not know whether I shall get it, but I stand in need of it as I am not over well. I have no time to write more. I will let you know what happens.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
Sculptor, in Rome.

From Rome, [October 17th, 1509].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

BUONARROTO,—I received the bread; it is good, but it is not good enough to invest in as there would be little profit. I gave the messenger five *carlini*, but he would hardly hand the bread over. From thy last letter I learn that Lorenzo [Strozzi] will pass this way and that thou wishest me to entertain him. Evidently thou hast little understanding of how I am placed here. However, I hold thee excused. What I can do I will. I hear that Gismondo is coming here to

arrange his affairs. Tell him from me that he is not to expect any help from me, not because I do not love him as a brother, but because I am unable to help him in any way. I am compelled to love myself more than others, and I cannot supply all my own needs. I live here surrounded by the greatest anxieties, suffering the greatest bodily fatigues : I have not a friend of any sort, and do not want one ; I have not so much time as suffices for me to eat the necessary food. However, I trust I may have no additional worries, for I could not bear another ounce.

My advice about the shop is that ye should strive to do your best ; and I am glad that Giovansimone has begun to do well. Endeavour by just means to increase what ye already have, or at least to preserve it, so that ye may know how to deal with larger matters later on; for I am hoping that when I come back ye will be able to set up for yourselves, if ye be men enough. Tell Lodovico that I have not answered him because I have not had time, and do not be surprised when I fail to write.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
Sculptor, in Rome.

Lorenzo Strozzi was a Florentine wool merchant and member of the Arte della Lana, in whose shop both Buonarroto and Giovansimone were apprenticed.

From Rome, January 5th, 1510.

To Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

DEAREST FATHER,—In my last letter I expressed myself as in favour of buying. You now inform me

that, in addition to Girolamo Cini's land, you are negotiating for another farm at Pazolatico. I should buy them both if the title deeds are in order, but see that you keep your eyes open and are not involved in lawsuits to follow. Be exceedingly careful to see that you are secure. They speak encouragingly about the house (*), but I am not expecting much, as I know I shall only be given a free tenancy for the period of my stay here. It is useless to look at it in any other light. Buonarroto writes to me with reference to his getting married. I will tell you what I think of the matter, and it is this: within the next five or six months I hope to set you all free and to make you a present of all the moneys you have had from me up to this day. After that you can all of you do as you please, and in every way possible I will always help every one of you. But advise Buonarroto not to marry before this summer is over: if I were with you I would tell you my reasons. Since he has waited till now, he will not be older in six months' time. Buonarroto also informs me that Bernardino di Pier Basso desires to come here and enter my service. If that is his desire, let him come at once, before I engage anyone else, for I want to begin work on something or other. As to his wages, I will give him

(*) Michelangelo had been in occupation of this house in Rome since the commencement of the tomb of Julius, but had been obliged to pay rent for it. From the date when the new agreement for this work was drawn up—July 7th, 1516—he obtained licence to occupy the same house rent free for the whole period of nine years, within which the work was to be completed.

what was mentioned, three ducats a month, that is to say, and his expenses. The fact is that my housekeeping is after a simple sort and I do not wish to change it. Tell him what I have said and bid him make haste. If after a week's trial he does not like being in my service he can return to Florence, and I will give him the money for his journey. There is nothing else I wish to say.

On the 5th of January.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
Sculptor, in Rome.

From Rome, January, 1510.

To Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

MOST REVERED FATHER,—I answered you with reference to Bernardino, saying that I wished first of all to settle the matter of the house, of which you have heard; and I have still to make the same reply. I sent for him at first because I was promised that within a few days this matter (*) would be settled so that I might get to work. Afterwards I realised that it was going to be a lengthy business, and I am now looking for another house so that I may get out of this one. I shall not have any work done until this agreement is drawn up. Please tell him [Bernardino] how the matter stands. About the boy that came—that scoundrel of a muleteer swindled me out of a ducat, and swore that he had agreed for two broad

(*) The new contract for the tomb of Julius, that is to say, which gave Michelangelo his house rent free.

ducats of gold: and all the other boys who come here with muleteers give them no more than ten *carlini*. I was more angry about it than if I had lost twenty-five ducats, for I see that it was the father's fault, who wanted to send him on muleback in state. Oh, I never had such luck, not I! And more than that, both the father and the lad assured me that he would do anything, look after the mule and sleep on the ground if necessary; and now I have to look after him instead. As if I wanted other vexations besides those I have had since I came back! I have had the boy I left here ill ever since my return. He is getting better now, it is true, but he has been at death's door and was given up by the doctors for about a month, and during all that time I have not been to bed, to say nothing of other troubles. Then there comes this dry-scab (*) of a boy, who says, and says, that he does not want to lose time and that he wants to learn. When he was in Florence he said that two or three hours a day would be sufficient: now the whole day is not enough and he wants to be drawing all night as well. His father has put him up to this. If I were to say anything to him he would declare that I did not wish him to learn. I wanted somebody to look after the house; and if he was not prepared to do this they ought not to have put me to this expense. But they are schemers, and working for their own ends: but enough. I beg you to have

(*) The original is "questa merda secca di questo fanciullo," a phrase which is obviously unsuitable for literal translation into English.

him fetched away, for he annoys me to such an extent that I can bear with him no longer. The muleteer has received so much money that he can very well afford to take him back again: he is a friend of his father's. Tell the father to send for him. I shall not give him another *quattrino*, for I have no money. I will put up with him until he is sent for, but if they do not send for him I shall send him away, although I told him to go away the second day he was with me, as well as afterwards on several occasions, and he does not realise it.

With regard to the shop, I will send you a hundred ducats on Saturday next. If you are satisfied that they are doing their best, give this money to them and make me their creditor, as was done with Buonarroto when he went away. If it should prove that they are not doing their utmost, deposit the money in my name at Santa Maria Nuova. This is not the time for investments.

Your MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

[P.S.]—If you should meet the boy's father explain the matter to him gently: tell him he is a good lad but too refined, and not suited for my work, and that he must send for him.

From Rome, [January, 1510].

To Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

DEAREST FATHER,—I am sending you a hundred broad ducats in gold which you are to give to

Buonarroto and the others, and for which you are to make me their creditor with the shop as security. If they do their utmost to succeed, I will help them from time to time to the best of my ability—tell them so. Go, therefore, on receipt of this, to Bonifazio [Fazi] or to Lorenzo Benintendi, both you and Buonarroto, and he will pay over the money. He will pay you a hundred broad ducats in gold, in exchange for an equal sum given by me here to Baldassare Balducci. I wrote in reply to your remark about buying to say that this is not the proper time. As for my affairs here, I will do the best I can, God helping me. I wrote to you about that boy, saying his father was to send for him and that I would give him no more money. This I now confirm: the carrier has already received quite enough to cover his return journey. The boy is all right for Florence, where he can stay at home and study and be with his father and mother but here he is not worth so much as a *quattrino*, and he keeps me slaving like a beast, while my other boy is not yet well enough to get up. In fact I have not kept him in the house here, for when I was so distracted and could bear with him no longer I sent him off to share the room of a brother of his. I have no money. I have had to wring my very heart strings to send what I am sending you now, and I do not feel justified in asking for any more, for I have no assistants working under me, and I alone am doing but little. When I have arranged about this house business I hope to begin work in earnest.

MICHELANGELO,
Sculptor, in Rome.

From Rome, September 5th, [1510].

To Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

DEAREST FATHER,—I received a letter from you this morning, the 5th of September, which distressed me very greatly because I learn from it that Buonarroto is ill. I entreat you to let me know how he is directly you receive this letter, for if he should be seriously ill I would ride post haste to you this coming week, although it would be a very great inconvenience to me—for this reason, that I am due to receive five hundred ducats which I have earned according to my agreement, while the Pope ought to have given me another five hundred for undertaking the other part of the work. (*) He has now gone away from here without leaving me any instructions, so that I am without money and do not know what I ought to do. I might go away, but I do not want him to be angry, nor do I want to lose my money: on the other hand, it will be difficult for me to stay here. I have written to him and am waiting for the reply: however, if Buonarroto is in danger, let me know, for I will leave everything and come. Take all care of him, and see that he does not lack money for what may be required. Go to the Spedalingo at Santa Maria Nuova and, if he does not believe you otherwise, show him my letter: ask him for any sum between fifty and a hundred ducats that may be necessary, and do not

(*) Michelangelo here refers to the painting of the Sistine vault just finished. The "other part of the work" was the painting of the walls, but this was never executed.

think about anything else. Do not be troubled: God did not create us so that He might abandon us. Answer quickly, and tell me definitely whether I am to come or not.

Your Michelagniolo,
in Rome.

From Rome, September 7th, 1510.

To Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

Dearest Father,—Your last letter caused me great disquietude when I read in it of Buonarroto's illness: wherefore, immediately on receipt of this, go to the Spedalingo and get him to give you fifty or a hundred ducats, if you have need of them, and see that he [Buonarroto] is well provided with everything necessary and does not go short for lack of money. I have to tell you that I have still to receive from the Pope the five hundred ducats I have earned, and that a similar sum ought to be paid to me for putting up the scaffolding and proceeding with the other part of my work. Yet he [Julius] has gone away from here without leaving me any instructions. I have written a letter to him. I do not know what the result will be. I should have come to Florence directly I received your last letter, but if I were to go away from here without permission I fear the Pope would be greatly annoyed, and I should lose the money due to me. Nevertheless, if Buonarroto is seriously ill, let me know at once, for if you think it advisable I will come post haste and will be with you in two days: men are worth more than money. Let me

have news quickly, because I am consumed with anxiety.

The 7th day of September.

Your Michelagniolo,
Sculptor, in Rome.

From Rome, September 15th, [1510].

To Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

Dearest Father,—I have given three hundred and fifty broad ducats of gold to Giovanni Balducci here, and he will have them paid over in Florence: therefore, on receipt of this letter, go to Bonifazio Fazi and he will give them to you, that is to say, he will give you three hundred and fifty broad ducats in gold. When you have received them, take them to the Spedalingo and bid him dispose of them as you know he has disposed of the other for me. There remains a sum of a few odd ducats, which you are to take for yourself, as I said in my last letter. If you have not already taken them, take them now for your own use: and if you need more, take as much as you require, for whatever sum you need I will give you, even if it should be all I have. If you think it necessary for me to write anything to the Spedalingo, let me know.

I learn from your last letter how matters are going, and I am much worried about it. I cannot render you any other assistance, but do not be disheartened over this affair and do not yield to one ounce of sadness. Bear in mind that losing one's possessions is not losing one's life. I will more than make up to you what you may lose, but have a care that you set no store by this

world's gear, for it is an untrustworthy possession. However, do your best, and thank God that, since this affliction must come upon you, it has come at a time when you are better able to withstand it than you would have been in the past. Hold fast to life itself, and, sooner than suffer anxieties, let your possessions go: for I would rather have you alive and poor than I would have you dead and myself be the master of all the money in the world. And if those chatter-boxes or anybody else in Florence complain against you, let them say on, for they are ignorant folk and lacking in human kindness.

On the fifteenth of September.

Your Michelagniolo,
Sculptor, in Rome.

[P.S.].—When you take the money to the Spedalingo, let Buonarroto accompany you, and see that neither you nor he speak to any one about it for security's sake; that is to say, see that neither you nor Buonarroto tell anyone that I ever send you money—either now or at any other time.

From Rome, October 3rd, 1510.

To Lodovico di Lionardo di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

Dearest Father,—On Tuesday I went to speak with the Pope. I will explain the reason to you when I have more time: suffice it that on Wednesday morning I went back again and he caused me to be paid four hundred gold ducats of the Camera. Of this sum I am sending three hundred broad ducats to Florence, for I am paying three hundred broad

ducats of gold to the Altoviti here so that the Strozzi may pay you the money there. Draw up a proper receipt, therefore, take the money to the Spedalingo, and tell him to do with it as with the former sums, and remind him about that farm. If he tries to put you off, see what you can do in the way of buying from others, if you can find a sound investment, for I authorise you to spend any sum up to 1400 ducats. Take Buonarroto with you and beg the Spedalingo to do what he can for us. Do your best to buy through him because that is the safest way.

I wrote to you saying that neither my drawings nor anything else were to be touched by anybody. I have received no answer from you. It appears to me that you do not read my letters. No more. Pray to God that I may win honour here and may give satisfaction to the Pope, for if he is satisfied with me I hope we may receive some benefit from him: and pray to God also for him.

Your Michelagniolo,
Sculptor, in Rome.

From Rome, January 10th, [1511].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico Simoni,
in Florence.

Buonarroto,—Some days ago I received a letter from thee setting forth thy views in detail: and as it would be a lengthy matter to reply in full to all thou sayest, I will tell thee briefly what I think. With regard to the shop, I am minded to do all I promised you as soon as I return to Florence: and although I wrote saying this was the time to invest

in a piece of land, I am still inclined to buy the shop, because when I have finished my work here and have received all that will then be due to me there will be enough to allow of my keeping my promises to you. As to thy being able to find someone now who will lend thee two or three thousand ducats for opening a shop, this must be a man with a longer purse than mine. I think thou shouldst by all means accept the offer, but have a care that thou be not deceived, for people are not inclined to do good to any but themselves. Thou sayest this man desires to give thee one of his daughters to wife, and I tell thee that all the offers he has made will fall to the ground—except the wife—when thou hast gotten her set fast upon thy back: her thou wilt find cling to thee more closely than thou desirest. And furthermore, I tell thee I do not like these rapacious dealings with men whose code of morals is lower than thine own. Avarice is a grievous sin, and nought that is concerned with sin can come to a good ending. My advice is that thou shouldst speak him fair and keep the matter open until I have finished here, when I shall know how I am situated. This will be within three months, or thereabouts. For the present act as seemeth to thee best. I was unable to reply before.

On the tenth of January.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
Sculptor, in Rome.

There are two other letters belonging to the year 1511, but they are of little importance. They show

that Michelangelo was sending what money he received from the Pope to Florence and that he wished to invest it in property. As the dates of these letters are purely conjectural it is difficult to decide upon their proper sequence, and even Milanesi does not place them in the order indicated by the dates he ascribes to them.

From Rome, . . . [1512].

To Lodovico di Lionardo di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

Dearest Father,—I told you in my last letter how the idea had got into my head that the farm on the Prato road was not a sound investment. Afterwards I received further information, and it seems to me, if I am not mistaken—that you had better have nothing at all to do with it. You tell me now that the Spedalingo sent you to view another farm two miles outside Florence: you say that it appeared very dear but that except for this you formed no opinion as to its suitability. I tell you that if you were to pay fifty or a hundred ducats more for a farm bought from him than one bought from anybody else there would be no harm in it: but I do not place much faith in him, for I doubt whether he be not a great rogue. The land in the Piano della Fonte in Valdarno which you say you have now under consideration would not be displeasing to me provided it is a sound investment: however, do what seems to you best and buy whichever you prefer, because what you find satisfactory I shall find satisfactory, let it be where it may; provided always

that it is a good investment. I have nothing else to say. I shall most certainly come to Florence this summer, if it please God, and we will clip the wings of this Spedalingo, if he does not accomplish something in the meanwhile. You need not tell me anything about Francesco di Consiglio, (*) for the father did not act so kindly towards you that I should have to befriend the son. He who does wrong will himself be the sufferer.

Your MICHELAGNIOLO,
Sculptor, in Rome.

[P.S.]—When you write to me send no more letters through the Altoviti. Send them as formerly to Balducci's bank: if you send to any other bank, write on the letter:—"To be delivered at Baccio Bettini's shop," and it will reach me.

From Rome, . . . [1512].

To Lodovico di Lionardo di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

DEAREST FATHER,—I sent on to you the information I had gleaned here, and told you what I had heard: that is to say, that it was rather a risky affair than otherwise—that farm near Prato, I mean. However, you are on the spot and can see and find out things better than I can here. Act as you think best. As to the letter of authorisation you wish me to send to the Spedalingo, treat me as though I were he and write out exactly what I am to say, with

(*) See p. 8.

the name and address and all. I will make a copy of it and send it to him, for I neither know his name nor how to compose the letter myself. Have no fear about it, for if you buy this land and the Spedalingo should refuse to give you the money, I will come to Florence in person and compel him to give it up. If you decide to buy, do not buy land near the Arno or any other dangerous river: give the preference to what the Spedalingo may offer you, and if you can get it for a reasonable price settle the matter. Even if the price were a trifle high I should be inclined to take it. I have no occasion to say more. We have not as yet seen any sign here of the danger you suspect in Florence, (*) and God grant that nothing may happen.

Your MICHELAGNIOLO,
Sculptor, in Rome.

[P.S.]—Let me have the copy of that letter in the exact form you desire, and I will send it you without delay. Then if you will take it to the Spedalingo I shall be much obliged, for he will see that, come what may, we intend to buy something.

The rumours which had reached Michelangelo from his father proved to be true, and the deposition of the Gonfaloniere Piero Soderini, the terrible sack of Prato at the hands of the Spaniards and their threatened invasion of Florence herself are clearly referred to in the next letter.

(*) The allusion is probably to the advance of the Imperial troops upon Tuscany.

From Rome, [September 5th, 1512].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico Simoni,
in Florence.

Buonarroto,—I have not written to thee these last few days because there was no occasion for it: but now, seeing the course matters are taking in Florence, it seems advisable that I should speak out. As, judging by what people say here, the [Florentine] Territory is in an evil plight, I think you ought all of you to retreat to some place where you will be in safety, abandoning all you possess: for life is more precious than worldly gear. If you have not the wherewithal to depart from Florence, go to the Spedalingo and make him give you money. If I were with you I should draw all my money from the Spedalingo and go to Siena; there I should take a house and stay until matters had settled down again. I believe the power of attorney I gave Lodovico has not yet expired, so that it will enable him to withdraw my money. If there is any occasion for it, let him do this: and in all such moments of peril draw out and spend whatever may be necessary. The remainder you will keep for me. Do not under any circumstances involve yourselves in the affairs of the Territory, either by word or deed: do as ye would do if it were the plague—be the first to flee. No more. Let me have news as quickly as thou canst for I am in a state of great anxiety.

Michelagniolo,
Sculptor, in Rome.

From Rome, September 18th, [1512].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico Simoni,
in Florence.

Buonarroto,—I read in thy last letter about the great peril which was menacing the Territory, and I was exceedingly distressed at the news. It is now said that the Medici have returned to Florence (*) and that everything has quieted down. I suppose, therefore, that the threatened danger—from the Spaniards, that to say—is averted, and that there is now no need for ye to flee from the city. Remain peacefully where ye are, therefore, and be neither friendly nor confidential with anybody, save with God alone; neither speak about anybody, whether it be good or ill, for the end of this business is still obscure. Let your own affairs occupy all your thoughts.

As to the forty ducats Lodovico withdrew from Santa Maria Nuova, I wrote a letter the other day to say that if ye should be in danger for your lives he was to draw not forty ducats but all I have. I did not, however, give him permission to take the money for any other purpose. I must tell you that I have not a single *grosso*, and I could almost say of myself that I go barefoot and naked: and I shall only receive the remainder of my money when I have finished this work. Meanwhile I suffer the greatest inconvenience and hardships. Therefore, if ye likewise should have to bear with some discomfort do not be impatient, and as long as ye have money of your own do not take mine, except in times

(*) The Medici returned to Florence on September 12th.

of peril, as I have already said. However, if ye should be in dire necessity from any cause, I beg of you to write first to me, if it so please you. I shall return to you soon. If it please God, I shall certainly not fail to be with you for the feast of All Saints.

On the 18th day of September.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
Sculptor, in Rome.

From Rome, . . . [1512].

To Lodovico di Lionardo di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

DEAREST FATHER,—Since I wrote to you I have heard that the Spedalingo would be likely to laugh at a mere authorisation signed by me. I have therefore had a power of attorney drawn up, which I now send so that you may show it to him and, as my lawful representative, may demand from him a sufficient sum of my money to cover the purchase of the property. I believe he will respect this present document: if it is unavailing, let me know.

The aforesaid power of attorney was drawn up here by a notary, by name Ser Albizo. I appoint you as my representative in this matter; that is to say, you are authorised to obtain from the Spedalingo, or rather, to force him to give you, so much of my money now in his charge as will pay for the land you are buying, including the tax: with this provision, that for no other purpose whatsoever shall you be free to spend a farthing of my money without my permission, nor shall you be entitled to withdraw any larger sum from the Spedalingo than that

necessary for the purchase. I believe the power of attorney is to this effect, for the notary told me so.

Above all things, if you decide to buy have an eye to the security of the investment, and let me know what you are doing, or rather, let me know when you have completed the purchase. No more. This summer I shall come to Florence without fail: nothing shall prevent me. The latest I can be delayed will be the end of September, but I do not think I shall be able to stay long with you.

Your MICHELAGNIOLO,
Sculptor, in Rome.

From Rome, [May, 1512].

To Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

DEAREST FATHER,—In your last letter I received the news about the farm you have bought from Santa Maria Nuova, and that it is a good thing. I was exceedingly glad to hear it, and although it has cost a considerable sum, I imagine you have satisfied yourself that it was worth the money. Even if it has cost a hundred ducats more than it ought to have done, it is not dear, in view of the soundness of the investment. I thank God that I have at last finished with this business. Now I have only one matter to settle, and that is to set up a shop for the others [his brothers], and I think of nothing else day and night. After that I believe I shall have fulfilled all my obligations, and if there is still life left for me, I hope to live out the remainder in peace.

Giovanni da Ricasoli has written me a letter to

which I have had no time to reply. I beg of you to present my excuses to him. I will answer him next Saturday. Nothing more.

Your MICHELAGNIOLO,
Sculptor, in Rome.

From Rome, [October, 1512].

To Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

DEAREST FATHER,—In your last letter you tell me to be careful not to keep money in the house and not to carry any about with me; also that I am reported in Florence as having spoken against the Medici.

As to the money, all I have lies in Balducci's bank, and I keep none of it either in the house nor upon my person, except such sums as are necessary from day to day. With regard to the Medici, I have never uttered a single word against them except in the general terms in which everybody talks—as, for instance, about the Prato affair (*). I think that even the very stones would have spoken of it, had they been able. There have been many other things said since then, to which, when I heard them, I have always replied:—"If they are really doing these things, they are doing wrong." Not that I believed the reports, and God grant they be not true. About a month ago someone who pretended to be my friend criticised their actions very adversely. I rebuked him, saying that those who spoke in such a way did wrong, and that he was not to mention the subject to

(*) The sack of Prato by the Imperial troops during the movement which brought the Medici back to power in Florence.

me again. However, I should like Buonarroto to find out quietly where the man in question heard that I had spoken against the Medici, so that I may endeavour to trace the origin of the rumour, and find out whether it came from someone professing to be my friend. I shall then be upon my guard. I have nothing more to add. As yet I have begun nothing, and I am waiting until the Pope tells me what I am to do.

YOUR MICHELAGNIOLO,
Sculptor, in Rome.

From Rome, [October, 1512].

To Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

DEAREST FATHER,—Your last letter informs me of all that is happening in Florence, although I already knew something. We must be patient, commit ourselves to God, and repent of our sins; for these adversities do not proceed from any other cause, and are chiefly due to pride and ingratitude. I never had to do with a more ungrateful and arrogant people than the Florentines. If, therefore, a judgment fall on us, it is but reasonable. As for the sixty ducats you tell me you have to pay, I think it very unfair and I am exceedingly angry. However, we must have patience for as long as it please God to let us be plagued. I will write a few lines to Giuliano de' Medici and enclose them in this letter. Read them through, and if you think it well to take them to him, do so, and see if they are of any service. If they are unavailing, consider whether you could sell what we

have and take up your abode elsewhere. If you should find that you have been more heavily dealt with than other folk, do all you can to avoid paying, and let them rather take everything you possess: let me know what happens. But if you find that others have received exactly the same treatment, be patient and trust in God. You say you have already put together thirty ducats: take another thirty from my money and send me what remains. Take it to Bonifazio Fazi, and he will instruct Giovanni Balducci to pay me here: get Bonifazio to give you a form of receipt for the said money and send it here to me enclosed in your next letter. Look to your life and health, and if you cannot share the honours of the land like other citizens, be content that you have bread to eat; and live well with Christ, and poorly, as I do here. I live in a miserable fashion, caring neither for life nor for honours—the world, that is—and I suffer excessive hardships, assailed by a thousand anxieties. It is now about fifteen years since I had an hour's repose, and all that I have ever done has been to help you: and you have never recognised this nor believed it. God pardon us all! I am ready to go on doing as I have done as long as I live, provided I am able.

Your Michelagniolo,
Sculptor, in Rome.

From Rome, [October, 1512].

To Lodovico di Buonarrota Simoni,
in Florence.

Dearest Father,—I learn from your last letter

that you have been received back into favour, and I am very glad to hear it. I learn also that the Spedalingo has raised your hopes, and that you think it better to wait a little. I think so too, because I am doubtful about buying from anybody else, and I do not believe, having regard to his numerous promises, that he will now deceive you. Therefore you will do well to wait. Giovanni da Ricasoli has asked me to do something I do not care to do, but I have no time to write to him to-night. Tell Buonarroto, therefore, to make my excuses with him, and tell him not to rely on me—he will understand. I have one more service to ask of you, it is this: there is a Spanish lad in Florence, by name Alonzo, a painter, who I understand is ill. There is a friend or a relative of his here, also a Spaniard, who wishes to know how he is, and he has charged me to write to some friend in Florence and find out about his state of health. I beg you, or Buonarroto, to find out from Granaccio (who knows him) how he fares, so that I may have certain news to give and may show that I have been desirous of serving him.

Your Michelagniolo,
Sculptor, in Rome.

The next document of importance in point of date is the second contract for the tomb of Julius. It is interesting to note that Michelangelo appears to have been very suspicious of the papers he had signed, for, not being a Latin scholar, he obtained a translation of the deed from Francesco Vigorosi, and made a careful copy of it with his own hand, this transcript

being now in the Archivio Buonarroti. The contract is dated May 6th, 1513, some three months after the death of Julius, the parties on behalf of the late Pope being the Cardinal Aginensis and the Datary, Lorenzo Pucci. Michelangelo is to undertake no other work that will interfere with the progress of the tomb, which is to be completed in seven years. He is to be paid a sum of 16,500 ducats of the Camera, this sum to cover both his salary and expenses. "As to the quality, excellence and finish of the figures in the said tomb, these are to be left to the judgment and conscience of the said Michelagniolo, who will be guided by the consideration of his own honour and fame." He acknowledges having received 3,500 ducats from the late Pope Julius, this sum to be a charge upon the 16,500 ducats. The remaining 13,000 ducats is to be paid as follows:—Two hundred ducats per month (*) in each of the first two years and a hundred and thirty-six ducats per month during the ensuing five years, which only make a total of 12,960 ducats. If Michelangelo cannot, for any unforeseen cause, finish the work in the seven years he is to be granted an extension of time until it is done. Subjoined there is a specification of the proposed work, this portion being written in Italian in both deeds.

"Be it known to all men that I, Michelagniolo, sculptor of Florence, accept the task of executing the marble sepulchre of Pope Julius from the hands of the Cardinal Aginensis and the Datary, who, after

(*) Thus in the Latin original. In the Italian transcript the words "per month" are omitted.

his death, have been appointed to complete this work, for the sum of 16,500 golden ducats of the Camera. The composition of the said sepulchre shall be in this form as followeth:—A rectangle with three sides visible, the fourth being attached to the wall and not visible. The front face—that is to say, the head of this rectangle—shall be twenty palms in breadth and fourteen in height, the return sides running back to the wall shall be thirty-five palms long and also fourteen palms in height. Each of the three sides shall contain two niches, resting on a basement which shall be carried round the said space, and shall be adorned with pilasters, architrave, frieze and crowning cornice, as appeareth in the little wooden model. In each of the said six niches there shall be two figures, about one palm taller than life, twelve in all: in front of each of the pilasters between the niches shall stand a figure of similar size, twelve pilasters in all and twelve figures in all. On the platform above the said rectangle there shall be a sarcophagus with four feet, as may be seen in the model, upon which the figure of the said Pope Julius shall be placed between two angels at the head supporting it, and two angels at the feet, making five figures on the sarcophagus, all larger than life, that is, nearly twice the natural size. Round about the sarcophagus will be placed six bases or pedestals, on which there shall be six figures of the same dimensions, all the six sitting. Furthermore, on the same level where these six figures are, above the face of the tomb which is attached to the wall, there shall emerge a little chapel, about thirty-five palms high, which shall contain five figures larger than

all the rest, as being farther from the eye. Also, there shall be three histories, either of bronze or marble as may please the said executors, introduced on each side of the tomb between one niche and another, as may be seen from the model. And I bind myself to deliver the said tomb finished at my own expense for the above-named sum, which is to be paid to me, as appeareth from the contract, within seven years. And if at the end of the seven years there still remain some part of the tomb unfinished, the parties interested shall allow me so much time as will enable me to complete what remains, should no other arrangement be possible."

From Rome, July 30th, 1513.

To Buonarroto di Lodovico Simoni,
in Florence.

Buonarroto,—The stonecutter Michele has come here to work with me, and has asked me for some money for certain of his relatives in Florence. I am sending this money to thee: go, therefore, immediately to Bonifazio and he will give thee four broad ducats, which thou art to give to Meo di Chimenti, the stonecutter, now working for the Cathedral. Give him the letter enclosed in this and addressed to him. Let him give thee a receipt signed with his own hand to the effect that he has received this money from me on behalf of Michele. Send on the receipt to me.

The said Michele says thou toldest him thou hadst been obliged to spend something like sixty ducats at Settignano. I remember thee saying here, too, at table that thou wast compelled to spend a good deal

out of thine own pocket. I pretended not to understand thee, and expressed no surprise because I know thee too well. I suppose thou hast put this in writing with the idea that some day it may enable thee to put in a claim for repayment. I should like to ask of thine ingratitude whence thou hast obtained this money: I should like to know if thou hast forgotten the two hundred and twenty-eight ducats of mine thou tookest from Santa Maria Nuova, and the many other hundreds of ducats I have spent upon you and upon the home; or the trouble and toil to which I have subjected myself for all your sakes. I would like to know whether thou hast taken all these things into consideration. If thou hadst sufficient brains to think the matter out thou wouldst not say, "I have spent so-and-so of my own money"; thou wouldst not have come here to push your affairs with me if thou hadst paused to remember how I have always behaved to you in the past. Rather, thou wouldst have said:—"Michelangelo remembers what he has written to us, and if he does not fulfil his promises now there must be some obstacle of which we know nothing." And then thou wouldst have waited patiently; for it is of little avail to strike spurs into a horse that is already galloping as fast as he is able, and even faster. But ye have never understood me in the past, and ye do not understand me now. May God forgive you! for He of His grace has allowed me to bear what I am bearing—or rather, what I have borne—so that ye may benefit thereby. Ye will realise this to the full when ye no longer have me to assist you.

I had better tell thee that I do not expect to be able to come to you this September, for I am being driven such a way, in such a way (*i' modo, i' modo*) that I cannot find time even for eating. God grant I may be able to bear it. However, if I can I would like to send Lodovico that power of attorney I wrote about. It has never been out of my mind, and I want to place at his disposal a thousand broad ducats, as I promised, so that with the other money ye already have ye may begin to do business on your own account. I seek for none of your earnings, but I wish to be assured that at the end of ten years, if I am still alive, ye will return me this thousand ducats, either in goods or money, should I want it. I do not suppose it will ever happen, but should I ever be in difficulties I should like to have the money to fall back upon, as I have already said. This will act as a curb upon you and prevent your squandering it: think it over, therefore; take counsel and write to me what ye wish to do. I should like ye to divide that four hundred ducats of mine ye now hold into four parts and take one each, for I give them to you as a present; a hundred for Lodovico, a hundred for thyself, a hundred for Giovansimone and a hundred for Gismondo,* with this restriction, this restriction (*con questo, con questo*) that ye are not to withdraw the money from the shop for any purpose whatsoever. No more. Show this letter to Lodovico. Make up your minds what ye intend to do and give me the assurance I have asked for. On the

(*) Michelangelo's brother Sigismondo, born on January 22nd, 1481, and consequently his junior by some six years.

thirtieth day of July. Do not forget to give Michele the money I sent thee.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
Sculptor, in Rome.

Lodovico has endorsed the original with the following querulous note :—"As to the hundred ducats he gives to his brothers and me, I never had mine."

From Rome, June 16th, 1515.

To Buonarroto di Lodovico Simoni,
in Florence.

BUONARROTO,—I have written the letter to Filipo Strozi; see if it pleases thee, and give it to him. I know he will hold me excused if it is not in the proper form as writing is not my profession. It is enough if it serve thy purpose. I would like thee to go to the Spedalingo of Santa Maria Nuova and tell him to have fourteen hundred ducats of my money paid to me here because I shall have to make a great effort this summer to get my work done quickly, (*) as I expect soon to have to enter the Pope's service. For this work I have bought some twenty thousand [pounds] of copper (*rame*) for casting certain figures. I must therefore have money, so as soon as this letter

(*) The tomb of Julius. There is a break in the correspondence from the middle of 1513 to the spring of 1515, but the letters earlier in date than the one given here are of little importance. Michelangelo, it may be mentioned, had been proceeding with the tomb since the signing of the second contract; while the work on which he was expecting to be employed by Leo X., the successor of Julius II., was in all probability the façade of San Lorenzo at Florence.

arrives arrange with the Spedalingo to have the sum mentioned paid to me: and if thou canst arrange with Pier Francesco Borgerini, who is now in Florence, to have the money paid through his bank here, I should be glad, for Pier Francesco is my friend and would serve me well. Keep this matter to thyself, for I would like it paid here secretly: and for the balance remaining at Santa Maria Nuova obtain sufficient security from the Spedalingo as a precaution. I am waiting for the money. No more.

On the 16th day of June, 1515.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
In Rome.

From Rome, [August 1st, 1515].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico Simoni,
in Florence.

BUONARROTO,—Thy last letter explains the state of the accounts, as well as of the book and the papers. I was glad to have this information, for I propose to draw the money soon, as I have already told thee: I will advise thee in good time. Enclosed in this will be a letter for Michele [da Settignano] which is to be given to him. I do not write to him because I know he is mad, but because I am in need of a certain quantity of marble, and do not know how else to obtain it. I do not want to go to Carrara myself, for I cannot, and I am not able to send anyone else who would be suitable, as if they are not madmen they are traitors and rogues—like that scoundrel Bernardino [di Pier Basso] who at the end of his stay here left me a hundred ducats worse off than I was before, not to

mention his going about gossipping and complaining about me all over Rome. I have only learnt this since I have been back here. He is a villainous scoundrel: avoid him as you would avoid fire, and do not allow him to enter the house under any pretext. I have wandered from my original subject. I have nothing else to say. Thou wilt give the letter to Michele.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
In Rome.

Michelangelo's difficulties with regard to the marble arose out of the desire of the Medici and the Florentines to open new quarries at Pietrasanta and Serravezza, instead of obtaining their material from Carrara as they had hitherto always done. As a consequence the Marchese di Carrara, who saw a portion of his revenues threatened by the new departure, was exceedingly angry, and not only withdrew his favour from Michelangelo, but placed every conceivable difficulty in his way, in which, as may be supposed, he was ably seconded by the Carraresi.

From Rome, August 4th, [1515].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico di Lionardo Simoni,
in Florence.

BUONARROTO,—As I have heard certain things here with reference to the Spedalingo which do not please me, thou who art in Florence and nearer to him canst see, or rather judge, the matter better than I. Therefore, if it should appear to thee that my money is in any sort of danger, pay it over to me here. Go to

Pier Francesco Borgerini and he will have it transferred to Rome in my name. If thou thinkest it advisable, do this at once, immediately on receipt of this letter, and do not hesitate for any cause; but if thou thinkest otherwise, write to me and let me hear what thou hast to say of the matter. I should be very glad, also, if thou wouldst find out whether the road for the marbles is to be made by Michele or by others, and let me know. I beg of thee to answer promptly as I am anxious about it; and let me know how Lodovico is, because it is over long since he wrote to me last.

The fourth day of August,

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

The road mentioned in this letter was that already mentioned as connecting the quarries at Pietrasanta and Serravezza to the river. It is frequently referred to in the later letters.

From Rome, August 11th, [1515].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico Simoni,
in Florence.

BUONARROTO,—I learn from my last letter that the Spedalingo told thee he had not as yet completed the realisation of my money. This seems to me a bad sign, and I doubt whether I may not have to bring an action against him. Since I came back from Florence I have done no work whatever, and have merely prepared the models (*) and arranged for the work, so that

(*) For the tomb of Julius, in fulfilment of the contract.

by a supreme effort I might be able to finish it in two or three years. I have given a promise to that effect, and have incurred heavy expenses relying solely on the money I have in Florence, for I supposed that I could draw it whenever necessary, as is only reasonable and in accordance with the terms of the deposit. If the money were to fail me at this juncture I should be left high and dry. Therefore, directly thou receivest this go and find the Spedalingo and tell him I must have money immediately and without fail; tell him also that if my own deposit were not available I should have thought he would have lent me some of his own money seeing that he has had the care of so much of mine for so long, without having to pay any interest. If he should wish to pay this money to thee, make it payable here through Pier Francesco Borgerini; but if he should wish to pay it to me here direct, let him do so: the only condition I make is that I must have it without delay. Let me know what has been decided, and I will tell thee what to do. Let the Spedalingo know that I have arranged for a sum of six thousand ducats to be placed in his hands before the expiration of the next four months. No more. As to the marble thou hast mentioned, it is not thine affair: I will take care that I am served in one way or another. I hear that nothing is being done in Florence. Rest in peace and pass the time of waiting as well as ye can; and do not meddle with anything outside the scope of your private affairs. Let me have an immediate reply.

On the 11th of August.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

From Rome, [September 1st, 1515].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico Simoni,
in Florence.

Buonarroto,—I received the letters and took them to Borgerini, leaving the money there on deposit. I shall draw it either to-day or on Monday. Another time do not take money from Santa Maria Nuova until thou hast first found a means of sending it to me, and do not take more than thou sendest at one time. The remainder of the money, therefore, must be returned to Santa Maria Nuova without delay, if thou hast not already sent it here: see that thou obtainest the bank book and the papers, and send them to me as quickly as possible: do not leave my money in the hands of a stranger, for I know no man living.(*) Thou complainest to me about the prospects of thy shop. Be patient, for much more of the present state of affairs is due to circumstances than thou mayst suppose or believe. I have been expecting these evil times for several years, and I have always warned you of it, saying that it was not a propitious time to enter into such transactions. However, do all thou canst to maintain thy capital intact, and attend to the welfare of thy soul, for this state of affairs may last longer than thou thinkest. Tell Betto [Benedetto] da Rovezzano's father that I have no marble to be worked, otherwise I would have accepted his services willingly. Enclosed there will be a letter addressed to Messere Antonio, Chancellor to the Marchese di

(*) *Chè io non conosco uomo che viva.*

Carrara. See that it reaches him, and let me know of its arrival.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

From Rome, [September 8th, 1515].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico Simoni,
in Florence.

BUONARROTO,—I learn from my last letter that the remainder of the money is in Santa Maria Nuova after all. I wrote saying thou wert to replace it for I supposed from thy letter that thou hadst given it to Pier Francesco [Borgherini] and that he was about to send it hither in the care of a muleteer. It was because I did not approve of this method that I wrote saying the money was to be put back. Now thou tellest me it was never withdrawn, so that all accordingly is as it should be, and there is no need to say more on the subject. When I want it, I will let thee know. Thou writest as though to thy mind I care more than I ought for this world's goods: well, I care more for them for your sakes than I do for my own, as I have always done. I do not believe in old wives' tales, and I am not quite mad, as ye seem to think. Some time hence I believe ye will have a better opinion of the letters I have written you during these last four years than ye have at present, unless I am deceiving myself: and if I deceive myself, it is not in a bad cause that I do so, for I know that in all seasons it is wise to look after one's own self and possessions. I remember that about eighteen months ago—it may have been more, or less, I do not remember—thou

desiredst to do a certain thing. I wrote saying it was not the proper time, and that thou wouldst do well to let a year pass. Then a few days afterwards the King of France [Louis XII.] died, and thereupon thou didst reply, or rather, didst write, saying that the King was dead and there was no further danger to be feared in Italy; also, that I believed in old wives' tales and friars' chatter, and thou didst mock at me. Now, however, thou hast learnt that the King is not dead; (*) and it would have been far better for all of us if ye had followed my advice years ago. But enough. With thy letter I received one from Lo Zara [Domenico Fancelli] at Carrara, who appears willing to serve me. I am not writing to him, as I sent a letter to Messer Antonio da Massa, Chancellor to the Marchese di Carrara, when I wrote to thee last. I presume thou hast sent the letter on, and I do not wish to give instructions to anyone else until I have heard from him. Nothing more.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
Sculptor, in Rome.

From Rome, [October 20th, 1515].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico Simoni,
in Florence.

BUONARROTO,—I have already written telling thee to have that money paid to me here, when the rate of exchange will be in favour of the man to whom thou gavest it, and I now repeat the same because I do not

(*) "Le roi est mort, vive le roi!" The accession of Francis I. on the death of Louis held out but little prospect of peace for Italy.

want to be under any obligation, or as little as possible. The man who paid me the other money made a profit of two per cent. on the first sum and lost on the second. I did not mean him to lose, but I do not understand these transactions. I imagined it would be the same in each case. With regard to the present sum, do as thou thinkest best, and let it be paid to me when the exchange is advantageous. I wish to say that I am averse to laying any burden upon Pier Francesco Borgerini, and I wish to be under as little obligation to him as possible, for I have undertaken to execute a certain piece of painting for him, and it would seem as though I sought to be paid in advance. For this reason I do not wish to be under any obligation to him, for I like him and I do not want anything from him: I wish to serve him for the sake of my personal regard, not because I owe him a service. I shall work for him, if I am able, more willingly than ever I worked for any one else, for he is in very truth a goodly young man, and if I mistake not, hath no equal among the Florentines here. I learn that before long you will be celebrating the peace (*) in Florence, I am rejoiced at it, because what is for our good is passing pleasant to me: none the less, however, keep to thine own affairs and do not meddle with anything whatsoever: and do not ridicule what I have written to thee in former letters. No more.

I enclose a letter in this: please send it securely to Carrara.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

(*) Between Leo X. and Francis I.

From Rome, [November 3rd, 1515].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico Simoni,
in Florence.

BUONARROTO,—I have received the letter of exchange for the remainder of the money. I have not yet been to Borgerini's bank, but I shall go there next week. I believe they will treat me as well as on former occasions. Thou sayest the Spedalingo has been complaining at my drawing so much money in so short a time. It seems to me he must be a great fool to complain about anything of the kind, seeing that he is only called upon to give me back my own money on which he has been receiving interest for so long—especially as he offered to lend me five hundred ducats out of his own pocket if I had occasion for it. But I do not wonder, for I know what sort of a man he is. Thou askest me for money, saying that matters have now settled down and that thou canst begin to work and to save. I only laugh at thee, and marvel at certain things contained in thy letter. At present I have no other answer than this: I cannot help thee with money, for I shall have to do two years' work before I shall have discharged my obligations to these people, so much money have I received from them. Wherefore abide patiently, and hold fast to life: save as much as thou canst, and enter into no other transactions until the winter be over, and allow no credit whatsoever to any man. I write these warnings because I feel compelled thereto, seeing that I have these misgivings over the present state of affairs,

though I know thou wilt laugh them to scorn. No more.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
Sculptor, in Rome.

From Florence, . . . [1516].

To Lodovico,
at Settignano.

DEAREST FATHER,—I marvelled greatly as to what had happened to you the other day, when I did not find you at home: and now that I hear you are complaining about me and saying that I have driven you from the house, I marvel still more, for I am quite sure that from the day I was born till now my mind has never harboured a thought, great or small, that was detrimental to you. Every labour I have ever undertaken has been accepted by me for love of you. Since I came back from Rome to Florence I have, as you know, always thought of your interests, and you know that I have bestowed all I possess upon you. It is not so many days ago that, when you were ill, I told you and promised you that I would never fail you in anything that lay in any way within my power so long as my life lasts: and now I tell it you again. I marvel that you should so soon have forgotten everything. And yet you have had thirty years experience of me, you and your sons, and you are well aware that I have ever thought and acted, when I was able, for your good. How can you go about saying I have turned you out of doors? Do you not see what a character you are giving me when you say that I have turned you out? This is all that was wanting

to complete my tale of troubles: and all of them I bear for love of you! You repay me well, forsooth. But let it be as it may: I am willing to accept the position that I have brought you nothing but shame and disgrace, and I beg your forgiveness as though I had actually treated you in this manner. Forgive me as though I were a son who had always lived a wicked life and done you all the harm that could possibly be done in the world. And so once again I implore you to forgive me, like the scoundrel I am, but do not give me the reputation of having driven you from home, for that is a more important matter than you may suppose. After all, I am your son.

This letter will be brought by Rafaello da Gagliano. I beg of you for the love of God—not for love of me—to come back to Florence, as I have to go away and there are many things of importance I wish to tell you, and I cannot come to Settignano. As I have heard certain things which displease me about Pietro [d'Urbano, of Pistoia], who works for me—I heard them from his own lips—I am sending him back to Pistoia this morning. He will never come back where I am, for I do not wish our family to be ruined on his account. Ye were all aware that I was ignorant of his goings on, and ye ought long ago to have informed me, then this scandal would never have arisen. (*)

I am being entreated to hurry away from here, but

(*) If Milanesi is correct in ascribing this letter to the year 1516, Michelangelo evidently changed his mind with regard to Pietro d'Urbano, as we find him later on not only in the artist's service, but treated with the utmost confidence.

I do not mean to go until I have spoken with you and can leave you in the house here. I beg of you to lay aside all passion and come.

YOUR MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Florence.

From Carrara, [November 23rd, 1516].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico Simoni,
in Florence.

BUONARROTO,—I learnt from thy last letter that Lodovico has been at the point of death, and that the doctor finally said he might be considered out of danger if nothing fresh occurred. Since this is the case I shall make no arrangements about coming to Florence, for it would be very inconvenient just now. If, however, there is any danger I should desire to see him before he dies, come what may, even if I had to die with him. But I have good hope that he will get better, and for this reason I am not coming. Nevertheless, if he should have a relapse,—from which may God defend both him and us—see that he lacks nothing for his spiritual welfare and the sacraments of the Church, and find out from him whether he wishes us to do anything for the good of his soul: as for the needs of the body, see that he goes short of nothing, for I have worked always and solely for his welfare, to help him if necessary before he dies. Wherefore, bid thy wife tend him with kindly affection whenever there is occasion for it, and I will make good to her and to all of you anything you may spend. Do not have the least hesitation, even though you spend all we possess. I have nothing more to add.

Rest tranquil and let me have news, for I am overwhelmed with anxiety and fear.

There will be an enclosure with this. Give it to the sadler Stefano, so that he may send it to the Borgerini in Rome. See that it be sent securely, because its contents are of importance.

On the twenty-third of November, 1516.

The *Ricordi* contain a number of memoranda which seem to have been jotted down at various times in connection with the preparations for the façade of San Lorenzo. They cover the period from September 5th, 1516, to March 10th, 1520. The first entry deals with a period of ten days, and is as follows :—

"I record that to-day, this 5th of September [1516] I arrived in Carrara, in the year one thousand five hundred and sixteen.

"And on the 6th of the said month I hired a house from Francesco di Pelliccia.

"And on the 14th of the said month I paid twenty broad ducats in advance to the said Francesco di Pelliccia as appeareth from his written receipt.

"And on the 15th of the said month I advanced to Mancino, the son of Gian Pagolo di Cagione, and to Betto di Nardo, his associate, three broad ducats, hard by the door of the church at Carrara, Matteo di Cuccherello being present. The money was given on condition that if they should quarry such marble as I required I would accept it as repayment for the said sum, but if not, they were to return the money to me."

Elsewhere it is recorded that:—

"On the 1st of December, one thousand five hundred and sixteen, I went from Carrara to Rome, to Pope Leo, touching the matter of the façade of San Lorenzo; and by the 6th of January I was back in Carrara. Two men and two horses.

"In Carrara, spent for finding columns for the said work, 50 ducats to Cagione, 26 ducats to Cucherello and 18 ducats to Mancino. Twice I went from Carrara to inspect the model which Baccio d'Agnolo was making: that is to say, one month, with two men and two horses. (Then follows a list of expenses.)

"On the 6th, or rather, the 7th [of January, 1517], after I had made a verbal arrangement with the Pope and then returned to Carrara, there arrived on that day a certain Bentivoglio, sent by Iacopo Salviati, who brought me a thousand ducats from Iacopo Salviati on account for the work at San Lorenzo."

The contract with Cagione is of the following tenor: Whereas Michelangelo finds that "Lionardo, called Cagione, the son of Andrea di Cagione, has an old quarry wherein great progress might be made," he and Cagione have decided to go into partnership. "We have made an agreement this 12th day of February, 1517, and have entered into partnership, intending to share the expenses and the advantages. I am to engage the same number of men to work on my behalf as Cagione will engage to work on his behalf in the said quarry, and we have agreed that this partnership shall remain in force until I have obtained all the marble necessary for the above named work [the façade], provided always that my work be not brought

to an end by the death of the Pope or by other misfortune or by war or by my falling ill or by any other obstacle that may arise, and provided that the marble found be of good quality and suited for the purposes for which it is required." The price to be paid for the blocks follows. There is a further contract, dated March 14th, 1517, which seems to imply that the partnership had already been severed, as Cagione binds himself to supply the marble to Michelangelo instead of allowing him to quarry it for himself.

From Florence, [March 20th, 1517].

To Domenico [*Buoninsegni*, in Rome.]

Messer Domenico,—I have come to Florence to see the model (*) which Baccio has now finished, and I find that it is what it was reported to be—a child's plaything. If you think it ought to be forwarded to Rome let me know. I leave here again to-morrow and am going back to Carrara, having arranged that *la Grassa* [Francesco di Giovanni] is to make a clay model from the design and send it to you. He tells me he will make one which will be satisfactory. I do not know how it will turn out, but I suppose in the end I shall have to make it myself. I am sorry about this for the Pope's sake and the Cardinal's.(†) I cannot do anything else.

I must tell you that I have broken through the old

(*) For the façade of San Lorenzo.

(†) Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, afterwards Pope Clement VII.

arrangement (*) I made in Carrara, of which I have already written, having good reason to do so: and I have given them an order for a hundred loads of marble at the same, or a slightly better, price than the one I mentioned. I have also made arrangements with another firm (*compagnia*), and have ordered from them another hundred loads, with a year in which to deliver the marble on board ship.

From Carrara, [May 2nd, 1517].

To Domenico [*Buoninsegni*, in Rome].

Messer Domenico,—Since I wrote to you lately, I had no time to spare for making models as I said I intended, but the reason would take too long to write. I had already roughed out a smallish one of clay, sufficient for my purpose here, and although it is as twisted as a shaving I intend to send it you, come what may, lest this business may appear to be a fraud.

I have many things to tell you, so I beg of you to read on for a little with patience as it is a matter of importance. Well then, I feel myself capable of carrying out this façade for San Lorenzo in such a way that it shall be a mirror of architecture and sculpture for all Italy; but the Pope and the Cardinal must make up their minds quickly whether they want me to do it or not. If they wish me to do it, they must come to some arrangement, either giving me a

(*) With Lionardo di Cagione and Giandomenico di Marchiò.

contract for the whole work and entrusting everything to my care, or adopting any other plan they may have in mind of which I know nothing. You will understand my reason for this.

As I have already told you, and again since I wrote last, I have placed orders for much of the marble, and have paid out money here and there, setting the men to work in various places. Some of the places on which I have spent money have failed to yield suitable marble, because the work is very misleading, this being especially the case with the large blocks I require, which must come up to my standard of excellence. One block which I had already begun to excavate proved to be faulty at the further end, a circumstance which could not possibly have been forseen, with the result that the two columns I hoped to cut from it are no use and half the money is wasted. The consequence of these misfortunes is that out of all this marble I have only been able to retain a few hundred ducats' worth: and as I do not know how to keep accounts, I shall in the end only be able to prove that I have spent so much money as is represented by the quantity of marble I shall ultimately consign to Florence. I only wish I could do as Maestro Pier Fantini (*) used to do, but I have not enough ointment. Besides, I am an old man, and I do not think it worth while to save the Pope two or three hundred ducats at the loss of so much time, and seeing that I am

(*) Pier Fantini was a doctor who not only gave "professional attendance" without charging his patients any fee, but also supplied ointments and other medicaments for nothing.

Photo Anderson

POPE LEO X

After the picture by Raphael in the Pitti Gallery

being pressed to return to my work in Rome, (*) I shall have to decide what I intend to do.

And this is my decision. Knowing that I have to do the work and arrange the price I should not hesitate about throwing away four hundred ducats, as I have no account to render: I should take three or four of the best men obtainable and make them responsible for all the marble, stipulating that it is to be of the same quality as that I have already quarried —which is excellent, though small in quantity. For this marble and for the money advanced I should obtain good security in Lucca: I should give orders that the marble already quarried is to be taken to Florence, and I should go there to work both for the Pope [Leo X.] and for myself. If the above-mentioned arrangement with the Pope is not ratified it will make little difference to me; for I could not, even if I would, have all the marble for my work sent to Florence if I have to take it on again to Rome. But I am obliged to hurry to Rome so as to get on with my work there, because, as I have already said, I have been urged to do so.

The cost of the façade, according to the way I want to carry it out—including everything, so that the Pope may have nothing further to provide for—cannot, according to my estimate, be less than 35,000 ducats of gold. I would undertake to finish it for this sum within six years, with this condition, that within six months I should be given at least another thousand ducats on account for the marble. Should the Pope

(*) The tomb of Julius.

not approve of this, one of two things will be necessary: either the expenses I have already begun to incur for the aforesaid work must be charged to my account and I must bear the loss, or else I shall have to restore the thousand ducats to the Pope so that he may appoint someone else to carry on the façade, as at any cost I wish to get away from here, for several reasons.

With regard to the price mentioned, I wish the Pope and the Cardinal so well that as soon as the work is begun, if I were to find that it could be done for less, I would inform them of the fact even more willingly than if I were paying for it myself: indeed, I intend to do the work in such a way that it will cost me more than I am asking for it.

Messer Domenico, I beg of you to let me know definitely what the Pope and the Cardinal wish to do: this would be a very great kindness, greater than all the others I have received at your hands.

The next notice of the façade appears in the *Ricordi*. "Then, in the following August [1517] Pope Leo caused me to come to Florence to make a wooden model for the said work. There I fell ill, as did Pietro [d'Urbano] who was with me, and we were both at death's door. After that I made the model aforesaid and sent it to Rome: and when Pope Leo saw it he wrote to me saying I was to go to Rome also; so I went, and we agreed as to the manner of the work, and I undertook it at a set price, as appeareth from the contract. Moreover the said Pope Leo wished me to take all my work [for the

tomb of Julius] to Florence and do it there, so that I might work for him at the same time: he promised to pay all the expenses of transport, together with the taxes and any damage that might be done, although these things are not mentioned in the contract.

"On the 6th of February following [1518] I returned to, or rather, arrived in, Florence, and on the 25th I received from Iacopo Salviati 800 ducats on behalf of Pope Leo for the said work: and I went to Carrara: and as the Carraresi had not carried out the earlier agreement as to the marble for the said work, I went to quarry material at Pietra Santa, and opened the quarries now to be seen there, for never before had marble been excavated in that place. And I remained there occupied with this work until March 20th, 1518. . . ."

Meanwhile the contract for the San Lorenzo façade was duly drawn up and signed:—

"Be it known to all people that to-day, this XIX. day of January MDXVIII., his Holiness our Lord Pope Leo X. has entrusted to Michelagniolo di Lodovico di Buonarroto Simoni, the Florentine sculptor, who hereby accepts the same, the erection or rather the building of the façade of San Lorenzo in Florence, in pursuance of the articles and conventions here following.

"Firstly, the said Michelagniolo undertakes to execute the façade at his own expense and to complete it within eight years next ensuing, beginning from the first day of February next and continuing without interruption. The price thereof is to be 40,000 broad ducats of gold; and the work is to be carried out in

white marble of superior quality from Carrara or Pietrasanta, whichever shall be adjudged the most suitable. All the expenses of quarrying, transport, squaring, and carving in the round, in high or low relief, upon marble or bronze, including the cost of the marble and bronze and all cutting to waste shall be charge to Michelagniolo. The said work is to be composed, arranged, and carried out according to the general form and proportion of the wooden model with wax figures which the said Michelagniolo has caused to be made: the same which he sent from Florence to Rome in the month of December last. The form is to be as followeth.

"In the lower portion on the main front and extending to the first cornice there shall be eight fluted columns of marble, each about XI. *braccia* high, with capitals and bases, and between these shall come the three doors of the said church and four figures carved in the round, each about five *braccia* in height. There shall also be sundry panels in half relief as shown on the model. Also, at the same level and extending to the first cornice, there shall be return portions each with two columns, and between these shall be a figure carved in the round similar to those on the main front and in manner like unto those shown on the model.

"Also, above the first cornice and at the level of the second stage there shall be a great pediment (*piramidone*), or rather a pilaster, between six and seven *braccia* in height, above the columns both on the front and on the sides. Between them there shall be four seated figures on the front and two on the sides, all carved in the round in such wise that each seated figure shall

measure four *braccia* and a half in height. These figures shall be of bronze.

"Also, at the extremes of the said pilasters there shall be a cornice from which shall rise eight pilasters on the front and four on the return walls, that is to say two on each return wall, with their bases, capitals, and plinths. Between them there shall be on the front four recesses and on the return walls two of like form, each containing a figure of marble carved in the round and about five *braccia* and a half in height.

"Also, above each of these recesses there shall be a square panel, each of which is intended to contain a life-size seated figure of marble carved in a little more than half-relief, as may be seen in the model. Also, the divisions of the said model shows five histories in square frames and two in circular frames on the main front, all of which are to be in half relief. The said panels are to be about four *braccia* long by about eight *braccia*, though one is to be about nine *braccia:* the circular panels are to be from six to seven *braccia* in diameter. These scenes in relief are to be carved in marble with figures of the natural size or larger. And as it may be that the said scenes will appear too indistinct if carved in low relief the said Michelagniolo is willing to bind himself to execute them with such a degree of relief as may be considered sufficient to produce the proper effect.

"Also, there must be a proper pediment above the upper cornice in front of the central nave, with its cornice, finials, and ornaments of coats of arms and badges, this portion being finished in accordance with the model but with these ornaments in addition thereto.

" Also, as all the ornamentation is not indicated in its entirety on the model (such as the carved details of cornices, doorways and other minor works) the said Michelagniolo is willing to bind himself to supply all the several portions in all places where they may be required. All this is to be done at his expense, including such making good as may be necessary for connecting the return walls to the older fabric of the church.

" All the works above-mentioned are undertaken by the said Michelagniolo for the said price, to be finished within the said time at his expense : and he is to carve the figures and the reliefs himself. Should he desire to give portions of the work to be done by others, or should he require assistance he is to be given a free hand with liberty to give the work in part to others, or to abstain from so doing or to perform all such acts as in his judgment will ensure that our Lord the Pope may be satisfied and well served within the given period of time. The above covenants notwithstanding, if by reason of any intervention of Providence, illness, war, or other similar hindrance the progress of the work shall be impeded, in either of the said cases the aforesaid Michelagniolo places himself entirely at the discretion of his Holiness.

" And so that the work may be begun and carried to perfection our Lord the Pope aforesaid wishes the said Michelagniolo to be paid the sum of five thousand broad ducats of gold in each year, or any less sum that he may ask for during the said period of eight years. Furthermore it is agreed that he shall be paid forthwith the sum of four thousand broad

ducats of gold in gold so that he may begin to quarry the marble and for his other expenses, this sum being ultimately deducted from the total of the moneys due to him for the said work.

"Also, the said Michelagniolo shall be given a dwelling free of cost to him near the said church of San Lorenzo wherein he may prepare the marble blocks and the other material necessary to the said façade.

"And in all the aforesaid conventions and agreements the said Michelagniolo is willing to be governed by the pleasure of our Lord the Pope aforesaid. In token whereof he has signed with his own hand a declaration to the effect that he is contented therewith.

"*Placet:* I[oannes].

"I, Michelagniolo, son of Lodovico Simoni above-mentioned do declare myself content to abide by the conditions contained herein, in token whereof I have subscribed my name with my own hand here in Rome on the above-mentioned date."

From Florence, [March . . ., 1518].

[*To Domenico Buoninsegni*,
in Rome].

Domenico,—The marble turns out to be of excellent quality, while that suitable for the work at St. Peter's can be quarried without difficulty and nearer to the coast than any other, at a place, that is to say, called La Corvara. From La Corvara to the coast there will be no outlay involved in the making of roads, except where there is that small marsh,

near the coast. But for statuary marble such as I require we should have to widen the existing road from La Corvara to about two miles beyond Seraveza, and about a mile, or less, of entirely new road would have to be made—that is to say, we should have to cut our way through the hills so as to reach the spot where the marble has to be loaded. Therefore, if the Pope will not do more than is necessary for the transport of his own marble—that is to say, if he will not do more than make the road over the marsh—I shall have no money available for the other portion, and shall be unable to get the marble for my own work. And, further, if he does not make this road I shall be able to undertake no responsibility for the marble for St. Peter's, as I had promised the Cardinal; but if the Pope will see to the whole of the road I shall be able to keep my word.

I have told you everything in my other letters. Now, you are wise and prudent, and I know you wish me well. Therefore I beg you to settle the matter with the Cardinal as you think best and to let me know the result without delay, so that I may decide upon my own line of action, and if nothing is to be done, may return to Rome. I should not go to Carrara in any case, because there I should not get the necessary marble inside of twenty years: besides, I have made so many enemies over this business (*) that if I were to go back I should have to put on a face of brass whenever I talked with them.

(*) That is to say, the opening of the new quarries which threatened the monopoly of the Carraresi.

I ought to tell you that the Overseers [of Santa Maria del Fiore] have set great store by the matter of these quarries since I gave them information on the subject; I believe they have already drawn up a schedule of prices, town-dues and permits, while the notaries, the head notaries, the commissaries and the assistant commissaries are indulging in dreams of doubled revenues in that part of the state. Therefore it behoves you to be careful and to do what you can to prevent this business falling into their clutches, for then it would be more difficult to get marble from them than from Carrara. I beg of you to let me know what you advise as early as possible. Commend me to the Cardinal: I am here in his service and therefore I shall only do what you tell me, because I may assume that you are voicing his wishes.

If, in writing to you, I do not write as correctly as I ought, or if sometimes I do not employ exactly the proper word, I beg you to hold me excused, as I have embarked on a difficult enterprise (*) which makes tranquil thought impossible.

Your Michelagniolo,
Sculptor, in Rome.

From Pietrasanta, March 29th, 1518.

To Pietro Urbano,
in Florence.

Pietro,—When the bargemen come to thee and present Donato's letter thou art to pay them: thou

(*) *I'ò apicato un sonaglio a gli orechi.*

must give to each the sum mentioned in the letter which each will bring thee written by myself. The letters they are bringing from Donato are to be preserved.

Thou wilt also pay the carters: when they bring large stones pay them at the rate of 25 *soldi* the thousand [*libbre*], when they bring small stones, at the rate of 20 *soldi:* and keep a list of those who brought it with the amount delivered by each.

Pay the tax of 90 *lire* to the *Contratti* [? Contract Office] and get the book and the papers.

Give Baccio di Puccione the money he asks for, and keep an account thereof.

Buy some sticks so that the vines in the garden can be tied up, and if thou findest any earth or other dry material suitable for storing in that room, put the matter in hand.

Buy a piece of rope, about 30 *braccia* long, and do not get a rotten piece: pay for it and keep an account thereof.

Go to confession, strive to learn, and take care of the house.

Draw up the account with Gismondo: pay him, and make him give the account to thee.

I left thee 40 ducats to-day this 29th day of March.

From Pietrasanta, April 2nd, [1518]

To Buonarroto di Lodovico Simoni,
in Florence.

Buonarroto,—I wish to learn from thee whether Iacopo Salviati has been able to get anything settled

with the Consuls of the Arte della Lana, in pursuance of that resolution as he promised. If he has not, beg him to do so for my sake: and if he is disinclined to do as he promised, let me know, so that I may leave this place, for I have undertaken a task that will make a poor man of me, since it is not turning out as I expected. Nevertheless, if they are prepared to keep their bargain with me, I am ready to go on with it, despite the very great expense and annoyance, and despite the uncertainty.

With regard to the road here, tell Iacopo that I will do all *sua Magnificenzia* wishes and will carry out all his commands: tell him he will never be deceived in me, because in such affairs as these I do not seek my own advantage but the welfare of my patrons and my country. If I begged the Pope and the Cardinal to give me full control over this road I only did so in order that I might be able to give orders that it should be laid out in such a direction as would strike the best veins of marble. The best localities are not known to everybody. I did not ask for this contract to make money out of it; I do not entertain such ideas—indeed, I beg *sua Magnificenzia*, Iacopo, to place the matter in Maestro Donato's (*) hands, for he is well skilled in similar works and I am sure he is trustworthy. At the same time I should like to have control over the course it should follow and over its construction, for I know where the finest marble is to be found and

(*) Donato Benti, a Florentine sculptor and friend of Michelangelo.

how best to get it carted down; thereby, as I believe, reducing the cost for whoever is going to pay for the work. Repeat all I have said, therefore, to the aforesaid Iacopo and commend me to *sua Magnificenzia*, begging him to send a letter of recommendation to his agents at Pisa so that they may assist me in finding barges to bring my marble from Carrara. I went to Gienova [Genoa] and took four barges down to the place of embarkation so as to load them. Then the Carraresi tampered with the owners of the said barges, and endeavoured to surround me with obstacles, so that I have concluded nothing, and expect to go to-day to Pisa to charter other barges. Commend me [to Salviati] therefore, as I have asked, and write to me. On the 2nd of April.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Pietra Santa.

[P.S.]—You can treat Pietro, my assistant, as you would me. If he wants money, give it to him, and I will settle with you.

From Pietrasanta, [April . . . , 1518].

To Pietro Urbano da Pistoia,
in Florence.

PIETRO,—I learn from thy last letter that thou art well and attending to thy studies. I am very glad to hear it: be diligent, and lose no opportunity of drawing or of improving as much as thou art able. Ask Gismondo to give thee whatever money thou requirest on my behalf, and keep an account thereof. I have to tell thee that I have been as far as Gienova to charter barges for the transport of the

marble I collected at Carrara, and that I got them as far as Avenza: but the Carraresi corrupted the owners of the barges aforesaid and have given me so much trouble that I shall have to go to Pisa to get others. I am leaving to-day, and directly I have arranged for the transport of the said marble I shall return; which, I think, should be in about fifteen days. Strive to improve. There is no occasion for thee to come here at present. No more.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Pietra Santa.

From Pisa, April 7th, [1518].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico Simoni,
in Florence.

BUONARROTO,—As I have informed thee, I was beset on all sides over the transport of the marble. By the favour of Iacopo Salviati I was enabled to hand the matter over to a barge-owner when I got to Pisa, at a reasonable price, and I shall be properly served by him. Francesco Peri arranged all this for me at the request of Iacopo, as you already know: wherefore I beg thee to commend me to *sua Magnificenzia* and to thank him, for I am indebted to him for a great service which will lay all of us under an obligation to him for the remainder of our lives. I have received a letter from him, but I have not replied to it as I am not competent to do so. Within fifteen days, however, I shall be with you, and I hope by word of mouth to make a more suitable reply than I should know how to do in writing. I hope the road and everything will go smoothly

now. Tell him what I say, thank him, and commend me to him, as I have already told thee. I am setting out now for Pietra Santa. Francesco Peri has given me a hundred ducats, which I am to take to the Commissary [Vieri de' Medici] of Pietra Santa for the road.

On the seventh of April

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Pisa.

From Pietrasanta, [April 18th, 1518].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico Simoni,
in Florence.

BUONARROTO,—I learn from thy last letter that the resolution (*) has not yet been carried, and I am very much distressed about it: nevertheless, I am sending one of my lads to Florence simply so that he may remain there all Thursday and see what conclusion is come to, and on Friday morning he will return here and tell me the result. If they decide in accordance with the request I have put forward I will proceed with the work, but if they do not conclude anything on Thursday, as thou sayest may be the case, I shall not attribute the failure to Iacopo Salviati's unwillingness to do anything in the matter, but to his inability; and I shall get immediately into the saddle and be off to seek the Cardinal de' Medici and the Pope, and shall tell them how matters stand with me. I shall leave this business and return to Carrara,

(*) With regard to the making of the road from the quarries at Pietrasanta.

where they pray for my coming as one prays for the coming of Christ. The stonecutters I brought here with me from Florence have not the smallest knowledge either of the quarries or of this marble. They have already cost me more than a hundred and thirty ducats, and so far they have not quarried a single slab of marble which is any good, but they go about bragging that they have discovered some wonderful thing, endeavouring to get work for the Cathedral [Santa Maria del Fiore] and for other people with the money they receive from me. I do not know under whose protection they are, but the Pope shall hear all about it. Since first I came here I have thrown away about three hundred ducats, and I do not see any return whatever for myself. I have undertaken to raise the dead, to try and harness these mountains, and to introduce the art of quarrying into this neighbourhood : but if the Arte della Lana, in addition to the marble, were to give me a hundred ducats a month for the work I am called upon to do they would not be far out, and even then I should not have made a fat bargain. However, recommend me to Iacopo Salviati, and send a letter by my boy to say how matters stand, so that I may make up my mind quickly ; for this continued uncertainty is consuming my very vitals.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Pietra Santa.

[P.S.]—Those barges I chartered at Pisa have never arrived. I suppose I was cheated—it is the same with everything I touch. Oh, a thousand curses upon the day and the hour that ever I left Carrara!

This is the cause of all my ruin : but I will return soon to you. To do one's duty in these days is a sin. Remember me to Giovanni da Ricasoli.

On April 22nd, 1518, it was decided that Michelangelo should be given full authority over the construction of the road. Three months later the artist was in Florence looking for a workshop in which to store the blocks of marble.

From Florence, July 15th, 1518.

To Cardinal Giulio de' Medici,
in Rome.

On the XVth day of July, 1518.

Most Reverend my Lord.—As I hope to have brought a certain quantity of marble to Florence for the work at San Lorenzo before the year is out, and being unable to find suitable accommodation in which the said marble may be worked either within the precincts of San Lorenzo or outside them I have been obliged to provide a workshop for myself by purchasing a piece of land near Santa Caterina, from the chapter of Santa Maria del Fiore. The said piece of land cost me about 300 broad ducats of gold; and for the last two months I have been pressing the Chapter to give me possession. They made me pay sixty ducats more than it was worth, and while they admit they are wrong in doing so, they urge that they cannot ignore the instructions set forth in the Brief of sale which they hold from the Pope. Now, if the Pope is issuing Briefs licensing people to steal I beg your Most Reverend

Lordship to get one of these Briefs for me, since I am more in need of it than they are. If that sort of thing cannot be done I would beg of you to argue on my behalf after this manner—that is to say, tell them the piece of land I have bought is not sufficient for my purpose. The Chapter owns more land besides this, and therefore, I would ask your Lordship to get another piece for me, so that I may recoup myself for the excess I was charged when buying the other. If there should be any balance left, they can have it.

As to the beginning of the work, it is difficult . . .

Evidently Michelangelo thought better of it, and did not finish the letter. It ends abruptly, as above, and is not signed.

From Serravezza, . . . [August, 1518].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico Simoni,
in Florence.

BUONARROTO,—Only two of the stone-cutters who came here, Meo and Ciecone (*) still remain: the others came and then went away. When they arrived I gave them four ducats, and I promised to keep them supplied with money for the means of subsistence so that they might be able to do all I wanted. They worked only for a few days, in a half-hearted manner, with the result that that scoundrel of a Rubechio (†) nearly spoiled a column I have

(*) Francesco da Corbignano.

(†) Maso di Simoni di Matteo, called "il Rubecchio."

excavated. But I am still more annoyed that they should come there [to Florence] and give both me and the quarries a bad name, in order to clear their own reputation; for if I should require workmen later on I shall not be able to get them. I wish at least, seeing they have cheated me, that they would keep their mouths shut. Therefore I ask thee to make them keep silence by holding some threat over their heads; threaten them with Iacopo Salviati, or anything that is likely to be effective, for these greedy knaves are doing great harm to the work and to me.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Seraveza.

From Serravezza, [September 2nd, 1518].

To Buonarroto di Lodovico Simoni,
in Florence.

BUONARROTO,—I learn from thy letter that Donato Caponi has offered thee a certain piece of property and also that the Chapter [Santa Maria del Fiore] was willing to sell the remainder of the land. I cannot reply to thee on either of these subjects because I have arrived at no decision. We will discuss it later on when I am in Florence.

Those stone-cutters who came here were a worthless lot: they only worked to earn the little money I had given them, and then took themselves off. It is true that Meo and Ciecone would have stayed to do what they could, but they could do nothing without help, so I sent them off as well.

Sandro, (*) also, has gone off; he remained for several months with a big mule and a little mule in grand style, devoting his time to fishing and making love. I have thrown away a hundred ducats on him: he has left behind him a certain quantity of marble with instructions that I am to have what is suitable for my purpose. I cannot find twenty-five ducats' worth in the whole lot, for the whole transaction is a conspiracy. He has treated me very badly, either through malice or ignorance. When I come back to Florence I intend to obtain satisfaction, come what may. No more. I expect to remain here for another month.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Seravezza.

There are four more letters to Buonarroto, but they are of little interest. The last of them (July, 1527) has a postcript: "Do not touch the letters I send thee with thy hands," apparently for fear of the plague. Buonarroto died of the scourge on July 2nd, 1528.

The purchase of the land for the San Lorenzo workshop is mentioned in the *Ricordi*. "I record that on the 24th of November, 1518, Ser Matteo di Pavolo [Paolo] priest of San Lorenzo, made a contract with me touching a site he had sold me in the street leading from San Bernabà to Santa Caterina. The contract was drawn up by Ser Filippo

(*) Sandro di Giovanni di Bertino Fancelli.

Cioni, who is attached to the Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore: at night, about the second hour thereof, at Gualfonda, in the house of Francesco Gerini. I paid over the sum of 160 broad ducats, which was the price agreed upon for the land: Matteo de' Servi was a witness, with Baccio di Pecione, the joiner, who has a shop in Lungo-i-Fondamenti. I gave a ducat to the notary."

The *Ricordi* of this period are very numerous, and deal for the most part with the San Lorenzo façade, supplying some dates which are lacking in the letters. We learn that Michelangelo set out to discuss the project with Leo in Rome on December 5th, 1516, and returned to Carrara on the last day of the month. "Then, about a month later, I went twice from Carrara to Florence, as I had been commanded, to see the model I had entrusted Baccio to make: I also came a third time from Carrara, in pursuance of what Domenico Buoninsegni had written on the Pope's behalf, in order to set out the foundations for the said façade of San Lorenzo. I discovered at length that the said Baccio either did not know how to make a model from my drawing, or would not make one; and when I had gone back to Carrara to get on with my own work, the Pope, by the hand of the said Domenico, wrote again saying I was to leave everything, go back to Florence, and see to the making of the model myself. This I did. I left Carrara on the last day of August and had the model made: and Bernardo Niccolini paid the carpenter, and the wages of a boy who worked upon it. I afterwards sent it to Rome in charge of one of my

apprentices, (*) paying all expenses myself, except the muleteer, whom I did not pay. When the muleteer got to Rome I received letters saying I was to follow immediately, and I went—paying all my own expenses. When I saw the Pope we made a new agreement, as may be seen from two deeds concerning the said work. Afterwards, on the 6th of February, I reached Florence, on my way to Carrara, where I had to arrange for the marble for the said work; I remained at Florence until the 25th of February, 1517, on which day I received from Pope Leo 800 broad ducats of gold, paid me by Iacopo Salviati."

The succeeding entries are mostly in the hand of Pietro d'Urbano and consist of memoranda of expenses, but sometimes they are in the writing of the master himself:—

"To-day, this 29th of October, 1518, I took a hundred and seven ducats out of the thousand I have in hand of the Pope's money: that is to say, I took it out of the sewn-up bag. I gave thirty of them to Topolino." . . . (and other sums to others).

"I must note down that I went to Pietrasanta to bring down the column that broke, and that I remained there about two months and a half with a mule and a lad. As Berto da Filicaia was there also I will find out from him what day we left Florence, for I do not remember. The day I went away ill from Pietrasanta I can find out from a credit note signed by Donato Benti for sixty ducats, which sum

(*) This apprentice was the Pietro d'Urbano so frequently mentioned in these records.

I left with him in order to pay for my marble at Carrara. I will look at it and then write again."

From Serravezza, April 20th, [1519].

To Pietro Urbano,

at the sculptor Michelagniolo's house in Florence.

Pietro,—Matters have gone exceedingly ill. This morning — Saturday — I was about to lower a column (*) with the utmost care, and had provided for every emergency: but when I had let it down about fifty *braccia* one of the rings of the lewis bolt holding the column gave way, with the result that it fell into the river and broke into a hundred pieces. Donato had entrusted the making of the ring in question to the smith Lazzero, a friend of his; and as to its being sufficiently strong, to judge from external appearances it seemed strong enough to lift four columns, as it undoubtedly would have been if it had been properly made. But when it broke the rascally trick played upon us became apparent, for the ring was nowhere solid, and there was not so much metal in it as would have sufficed in thickness for the ring of a knife handle, so that I marvel it held so long as it did. All who were on the spot had the narrowest of escapes from death, and a

(*) The word used is "*collare*," which has several meanings. It means to "raise" as well as to "lower," but I think the meaning here is unquestionably that of lowering. This word is used by Italian translators of the Bible to describe St. Paul's escape when he was let down in a basket. "Ed io fui per una finestra del muro collato dai frati in una sporta."

magnificent block of stone is ruined. I left the ordering of this tackle to Donato during the Carnival, telling him to go to the blacksmiths and see that all the metal used was good and sound: thou seest how he has behaved to me. Then too the blocks of every one of the pulleys he had made for me cracked at the ring while the column was being lowered and are already on the point of giving way : yet they are twice the size of those used at Santa Maria del Fiore, so that if they had been made of sound metal they would have borne any load. But the iron used was crude and defective, and could not possibly have been worse. All this has come about because Donato wished to oblige his own friend, and left him to select the metal, serving me as thou seest. One must have patience. I shall be back for the *feste* [Easter], and if it please God shall begin work. Salute Francesco Scarfi in my name.

The 20th day of April.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Seravezza.

There are payments to this Lazzero mentioned in the *Ricordi.*

Under date of September 12th, 1519, the following memoranda appear in the *Ricordi*:—

"I record that to-day, this 12th of September, 1519, I paid 45 *lire* to Michele Lelli and Luca Fancellotti, carters, with their associates for the remainder of the marble they brought for me from Signa, seven pieces in all. They brought them to my workshop in the Via Mozza. The said carters told me they had been

obliged to bring the said marble after this manner; they told me two pieces required three pair of oxen each, and that the rest of the seven required two pair each. As I had not seen the blocks I paid what they asked. Afterwards, when I came to look at them, I found that among the seven three required only one pair of oxen, so that I was cheated out of nine *lire*, for we had agreed upon three *lire* the pair. On the same day I gave the said carters three *lire*, being the amount they said they had had to spend on repairing the cart.

"Shortly before the day above-mentioned I returned from Carrara whither I had been to see how my lad Pietro was, because he lay at the point of death. I had sent him there with the money to pay for the figures belonging to the façade of San Lorenzo. What with going and coming by the post, the doctor's fee, cost of medicine, and having Pietro carried on men's backs from Carrara to Seravezza, including the ten ducats I left with him at Seravezza, I find that I have spent thirty-three ducats and a half."

The façade of San Lorenzo was subsequently abandoned, as we know, and a tolerably full account of the final proceedings is to be found among the *Ricordi*, though the document to be quoted is rather a copy of an agreement than one of the usual memoranda jotted down by the sculptor.

"March 10, 1520.

"Be it known how I, Michelagniolo, Florentine sculptor, being in Carrara in the year one thousand five hundred and sixteen engaged in quarrying

marble for my works, was commissioned by Pope Leo to cause marble blocks to be prepared for the façade of San Lorenzo at Florence, in accordance with a design I had made for him for the said work.

"Afterwards, on the eighth day—or more correctly, one day—in the month of January following (*in detto tempo*) I received the sum of one thousand broad ducats from Pope Leo for the aforesaid work, disbursed by Iacopo Salviati and paid to me in Carrara by one of his servants named Bentivoglio.

"And about the twentieth of February, in the year one thousand five hundred and seventeen—or more correctly, during that period—I received in Florence the sum of eight hundred ducats from Pope Leo, which were paid to me by Iacopo Salviati for the said works in marble at San Lorenzo; and as I could not obtain the necessary blocks from Carrara I set to work to quarry them at Seravezza, a place near Pietrasanta, whence marble had never previously been excavated.

"And on the twenty-sixth day of March, one thousand five hundred and nineteen, the Cardinal de' Medici caused me to be given five hundred ducats on behalf of Pope Leo for the above-mentioned work: and the Gaddi of Florence paid the money to me.

"Now Pope Leo, perhaps in order that the façade of San Lorenzo aforesaid may be carried out more quickly than it would have been under the agreement he had made with me, sets me free, to which I consent: and all the moneys I have received as herein rehearsed are to be accounted as payment for the

beginning (*) I have made at Pietrasanta and for the marble blocks which have been quarried and rough-hewn, as may be seen to-day; and he declares himself content and satisfied with me, as already said, for all the moneys received for the said façade of San Lorenzo as well as in all other dealings I have had with him until this tenth day of March, 1519. For these reasons he leaves me free, and indemnifies me with respect to all charges whatsoever connected with work done for him or for others on his behalf."

This appears to have been drawn up for the information of some friend in Rome, and possibly formed the first rough draft of the Brief for which he asks in the following letter, possibly, as Milanesi suggests, intended for Sebastiano del Piombo. It is not necessary to quote it at length as much of it has already been given in these pages in various forms. He describes his difficulties with the Carraresi, with respect to getting the marble blocks, and says that as a consequence the quarries at Pietrasanta were opened. Afterwards, in 1519, he was released from the troublesome task of quarrying the marble himself, and the Cardinal de' Medici instructed him to draw up a statement of accounts showing what he had received and what he had spent.

(*) "Av(v)iamento." This word cannot refer to a "road," as some translators have supposed. The artist evidently refers to the opening of the quarries themselves, and it is clear from his letters of April 2nd and 18th, 1518, that the road from Seravezza to the sea was being constructed by order of the Consoli dell' Arte della Lana and the Overseers of Santa Maria del Fiore.

"I have made it clear that I have received 2,300 ducats at the times and in the ways herein set forth; also that I spent 1,800 ducats. Of this sum I spent about 250 ducats for landing-dues in the river Arno on account of the marble blocks for the tomb of Pope Julius, which I brought here so that I might be working for Pope Julius in Rome at the same time. The cost of this will amount to more than 500 ducats. I have put down nothing in the account for the wooden model of the façade I sent to Pope Leo in Rome: I have put down nothing in the account for the three years of my time which have been thrown away on this work: I have put down nothing for this most disgraceful act of bringing me here to do this work, and then taking it from me—and I do not as yet know why it was taken from me: I have put down nothing in the account for the house I had to leave in Rome, incurring damage to marble, plant and finished works amounting to more than five hundred ducats. Even with all these items excluded from my account I am left with a balance of only five hundred ducats out of the 2,300.

"Now we have come to terms. Pope Leo takes upon himself to accept the marble blocks already quarried just as they stand, while I am to retain the balance I have in hand and am to be set free from all obligation in the matter. I shall be well advised to have a Brief drawn up, and to get the Pope to sign it.

"Now you know exactly how the business stands. I beg of you to make a draft of the proposed Brief, setting forth clearly the position with regard to the money I have received for the work at San Lorenzo,

in such a manner that I may never be called upon to pay it back. Make it clear, too, that in exchange for the said money received by me Pope Leo takes over the aforesaid work in the quarries, the marbles, the plant. . . ."

The letter ceases abruptly at this point.

From Florence, . . . [June, 1520].

[*To Cardinal Bernardo Dovizi*, in Rome.]

MONSIGNORE,—I beg your most reverend Lordship, not as a friend or as a servant—for I am not worthy to be either—but as a low fellow, poor and brainless, that you will cause Bastiano Veniziano, the painter, to be given a share in the work at the Palace now that Raffaello is dead. Though it may appear to your Lordship that kindness to such as I am would be thrown away, I think that even in helping fools a certain pleasure may on rare occasions be experienced, like that derived from a diet of onions by a man who is tired of eating capons. You are obliging men of position every day. I beg your Lordship to try what obliging me is like. The obligation will be a very great one, and Bastiano is a worthy man; if your kind offices are thrown away on me, they will not be thrown away on Bastiano, for I am certain that he will bring honour to your Lordship.

This letter did not bring about the desired result, but it became quite a joke in the Vatican. "Quasi non c'è altro sugieto che rasonar in Palazo, se non la vostra litera: et fa ridere ogn' omo," wrote Sebastiano

to Michelangelo on December 3rd, 1520. The joke would seem to have lasted overlong, however, if it lasted from June to December. As Michelangelo remained some time in Florence there is a gap in the letters to his family, while the few written in 1521 and 1522 to his friends are unimportant.

The earliest mention of the Sacristy of San Lorenzo is to be found in the *Ricordi* :—

"On the 9th day of April, 1521, on behalf of the Cardinal de' Medici, Domenico Buoninsegni paid me two hundred ducats to go to Carrara and arrange for the quarrying of the marble for the tombs which are to go in the new Sacristy of San Lorenzo. I went to Carrara, and there remained about twenty days : I set out all the dimensions of the tombs on clay models and on drawings, and allotted the marble in two portions to two several firms ; that is to say, to Marcuccio and Francione del Ferraro of Carrara—to whom I gave fifty ducats of gold as a deposit, as appeareth in the agreement drawn up by Ser Calvano da Carra[ra]. The other firm was that of Pollina, Leone and il Bello, with fifteen others, all of them natives of Torano, a hamlet of Carrara ; to these last I gave a hundred ducats, as appeareth from another agreement drawn up by Ser Calvano. I took one assistant, Scipione da Settignano, with me, leaving him there to superintend the dimensions and quality of the blocks. I gave him six ducats a month, and ten ducats in advance. I took another assistant with me on horseback, Raffaello di Batista della Palla, to whom I gave three ducats. When we got back, in

the presence of Stefano the miniature painter, (*) I worked out my expenses for horse-hire and all the other sums I had laid out, and found that I had come out of it with twenty-three ducats in hand of the original hundred.

" On the 20th day of July I received from Domenico Buoninsegni, on behalf of Cardinal de' Medici, a hundred ducats in crowns, brought me by Stefano the miniature painter. I went to Carrara with one foot-servant, whose name is Poor John, and I remained there nine days. I gave no money to the Carraresi, because they had not fulfilled their promises. To Scipione I gave five crowns on account for his wages, and two crowns on our return to the servant who had accompanied me."

From Florence, . . . [June, 1523].

To Lodovico Buonarroti,
at Settignano.

Lodovico,—I shall only reply to such portions of your letter as seem to call for an answer: as for the remainder, I laugh at it. You tell me that you could not obtain your money from the *Monte* because I have had it registered in my name. This is not true, and I must reply sufficiently to convince you that you have been deceived by the person in whom you trusted, who has, perhaps, withdrawn the money for his own use, telling you this story in order to shield himself.

(*) Stefano di Tommaso, originally an illuminator of manuscripts or miniature painter, but subsequently acting as an architect. He carried out the actual construction of the Sacristy in San Lorenzo.

I did not have the money registered in my name in the *Monte*, nor could I have done so had I desired: but it is true that the notary said to me, in the hearing of Raffaello da Gagliano:—"I do not wish thy brothers to enter into a contract with the *Monte*, which, after the death of your father, would leave thee with no control over the money." He then took me to the *Monte*, where I had to spend fifteen *grossoni*, and added a provision to the contract to the effect that nobody should be entitled to touch the money as long as you lived. Under this contract, as you already know, you are made the beneficiary for life.

I have explained the contract to you, and you can cancel it if you like, since you are not satisfied. I have explained to you about the *Monte*, and you can go and see for yourself whether it is as I have said or no: I have always done and left undone exactly as you wished, but now I no longer know what you wish me to do. If the fact that I continue to live is displeasing to you, you have found the means of protecting yourself, and you will inherit the key to that treasure which you say I possess. And you will do well, because all Florence knows what a precious rich man you used to be, and how I have always robbed you and deserve to be chastised. And you will be highly praised for treating me as I deserved Cry out and tell folk what you choose about me, but do not write again, because you prevent my working. For my part, I must now make good all that you have had from me during the past twenty-five years. I would rather not have thrown this in your teeth, but I cannot stay my hand. Take care of yourself and

be on your guard against those who seek to do you evil. A man dies but once, and does not return to put right what he has done amiss. You have put off till death to do this. May God help you.

MICHELAGNIOLO.

There is another draft of this letter, but Michelangelo seems to have rejected it because he thought it might hurt his father's feelings too deeply. This is the last of the letters to Lodovico, although he lived on for another eleven years, dying eventually in 1534, at the age of ninety.

From Florence, . . . [1523].

[*To Ser Giovanni Francesco Fattucci*, in Rome.]

SER GIOVANNI FRANCESCO,—It is now about two years since I came back from Carrara, having gone there to arrange for quarrying the marble for the tombs ordered by the Cardinal. I then went to see him, and he charged me to make my plans carefully so that the aforesaid tombs might be finished without undue delay. I sent him, as you know—for you read it aloud to him—a report on the different ways of doing this: that is to say, I offered to give him a price for the work, or to be paid by the month or the day, or to do it for nothing, as his Lordship might prefer, for I was anxious to do the work. None of these alternatives proved acceptable. It was said that I had no desire to serve the Cardinal. When, later, the Cardinal again approached the subject, I offered to make full-size wooden models of the tombs,

in all respects the counterparts of the finished work, including all the figures modelled in clay and fibrous plaster, also full-size and complete in all respects: and I demonstrated that this could be done in a short space and at little cost. That was when we were thinking of buying that garden from the Caccini. Nothing came of this either—as you know. Then, as soon as I heard that the Cardinal was going to Lombardy I went to see him, because I was desirous of serving him. He said that I was to hurry on with the collection of the marble, that I was to engage workmen, and that I was to do as much as I was able so that he should find something already done, without being worried any more over it. He said he would carry out the façade too, if he were spared, and told me he had left the disbursement of all necessary moneys in the hands of Domenico Buoninsegni. When the Cardinal had gone away I wrote all he had said to Domenico Buoninsegni, adding that I was ready to do all the Cardinal desired. I kept a copy of the letter, and wrote it in the presence of witnesses, so that all might know how the fault lay not with me. Domenico came to see me immediately, and told me he had received no instructions whatsoever with regard to the matter, and that if I wanted any money he would have to write to the Cardinal for it. At last the Cardinal came back, and Figiovanni told me he had enquired for me. I went to him without delay, supposing that he wanted to discuss the tombs. He said to me: "We desire that these tombs shall include some highly finished pieces of work; that is to say, some work executed by yourself."

He said nothing about wanting me to make the whole of the tombs myself. I then went away, saying I would return and speak further about the matter when the marble had arrived.

Now, as you know, the Pope (*) in Rome has been told about the tomb of Julius, and a warrant has been prepared for his signature, authorising the taking of proceedings against me, and demanding the restitution of the moneys I have received, with interest and damages. You already know that the Pope said this was to be done if Michelangelo did not wish to proceed with the tomb. Now I shall have to do it in order to avoid trouble; for, as you see, the order has been made. If the Cardinal still wishes me to make these tombs for San Lorenzo, as you say he does, you must see for yourself that it will now be impossible, unless I am set free from my obligations in Rome. If he obtains this freedom for me I promise to work for him until the end of my life, without payment of any kind. It is not that I seek to be set free because I do not want to make the tomb of Julius—which I would willingly finish—but because I wish to serve him [the Cardinal]: and if he does not wish to obtain my freedom, yet still desires me to do some of the work for the said tombs myself, I will endeavour, while working on the tomb of Julius, to find time for making something that will satisfy him.

(*) Leo X. died on December 1st, 1521, and was succeeded by Adrian VI., who died September 14th, 1523. Clement VII. —the Cardinal de' Medici so frequently mentioned in these letters—was the next Pope. It would seem that the Pope here referred to was Adrian VI.

Photo Alinari

S. MATTHEW

After the unfinished statue by Michelangelo in the Accademia, Florence

From Florence, [January, . . . 1524].

To Ser Giovan Francesco Fattucci,
in Rome.

Messer Giovan Francesco,—You ask me in your letter how my affairs stand with regard to Pope Julius. I tell you that if I could claim damages and interest, according to my own estimate I should prove to be the creditor rather than the debtor. When he sent for me to Florence—I believe it was in the second year of his pontificate—I had already undertaken to decorate one half of the Sala del Consiglio in Florence, that is to say, to paint it; and I was to have three hundred ducats for the work. As all Florence knows, I had already drawn the cartoon,(*) so that the money seemed half earned. Beside this, of the Twelve Apostles which I had been commissioned to carve for Santa Maria del Fiore, one had already been roughed out, as may still be seen; and I had already collected the greater part of the marble for the others. When Pope Julius took me away from here I received nothing in respect of one work or the other. Afterwards, when I was in Rome with the said Pope Julius and he had given me the commission

(*) The cartoon for the Battle of Pisa. In 1503 Piero Soderini, *gonfaloniere* of Florence, commissioned Michelangelo and Lionardo da Vinci to paint each of them one-half of the Sala Grande of the Palazzo Vecchio. The statues of the twelve apostles were commissioned on April 24th, 1503. Only one of these figures was even begun, the St. Matthew, which consists of a hazy outline now preserved in the Accademia delle Belle Arti at Florence.

for his tomb, which would have required a thousand ducats' worth of marble, he caused the money to be paid over to me, and despatched me to Carrara for the material. There I remained for eight months, seeing the marble blocked out, and I brought nearly all of it into the Piazza di San Pietro, some being left at Ripa. Afterwards, when I had paid all that was due for the transport of the marble, and nothing remained of the money I had received for the work aforesaid, I fitted up the house I had in the Piazza di San Pietro with my own beds and furniture, on the strength of the commission for the tomb: and I summoned workmen from Florence, some of whom are still living, to come and work upon it. These men I paid in advance with my own money. By this time Pope Julius had changed his mind and no longer wished to have the work carried out; and I, not knowing this, went to ask him for money, and was driven from the chamber. Angered by this insult, I immediately left Rome, while everything in my house went to the dogs, and the marbles I had brought together lay about the Piazza di San Pietro until Leo was elected Pope, suffering considerable damage from one cause or another. Among other things that I can prove, two of my pieces of marble, each of them four and a half *braccia* [? long], were stolen at Ripa by Agostino Ghigi [Chigi]: they cost me more than fifty gold ducats, and could be claimed, because I have witnesses still living. But to return to the marble. More than a year elapsed between the time when I went to quarry it in Carrara and the time when I was driven from the Palace; and for this I

never received anything, but had to pay out some tens of ducats instead.

Afterwards, when Pope Julius first went to Bologna, I was obliged to go with the collar of penitence round my neck and beg his forgiveness: whereupon he commissioned me to execute a statue of himself in bronze, which was to be about seven *braccia* in height, seated. When he asked what the cost would be I said I believed I could cast it for a thousand ducats, but that it was not my trade, and that I did not wish to bind myself. He replied, "Go, and get to work: cast it as often as is necessary until you are successful, and we will give you enough money to satisfy you." To be brief, it had to be cast twice; and at the end of the two years I spent there I found myself four ducats and a half to the good. During all this time I never had any other money, and the whole of the expenses incurred by me came out of the thousand ducats for which I said I would cast the figure, this money being paid to me in several instalments by Messer Antonio da Legnia [Legnano] of Bologna.

Having hoisted the figure up to its position on the façade of San Petronio, I then returned to Rome; but Pope Julius did not yet wish me to go on with the tomb, and set me to paint the vault of the Sistine Chapel, the price of the work being fixed at three thousand ducats. The first design consisted of figures of the Apostles within the lunettes, while certain portions were to be decorated after the usual manner.

As soon as I had begun this work I realised that it would be but a poor thing, and I told the Pope

how, in my opinion, the placing of the Apostles there alone would have a very poor effect. He asked why, and I replied, "Because they also were poor." He then gave me fresh instructions, which left me free to do as I thought best, saying that he would satisfy me, and that I was to paint right down to the pictures below. When the vault was approaching completion the Pope returned to Bologna: wherefore I went to him there on two occasions for the money due to me, but it was to no purpose, and all my time was thrown away until he came back to Rome. Upon my return to Rome I set myself to prepare cartoons for the said work—for the end walls and sides of the said Sistine Chapel that is to say—hoping to receive the money for the completion of the task. I was never able to obtain anything; and one day when I was complaining to Messer Bernardo da Bibbiena and to Attalante, (*) saying that I could not stay any longer in Rome, and that I should be compelled to betake myself elsewhere, Messer Bernardo turned to Attalante and reminded him that, as it happened, he had money to give me. Then he caused me to be paid two thousand ducats of the Camera, which, together with the first thousand I had received for the marble made up the amount that was set aside for the tomb. I expected to receive more on account of the time lost and the work done. Out of this sum of money I gave a hundred ducats to Bernardo and fifty to Attalante, because they had in a manner restored me to life.

Then came the death of Pope Julius, and in the

(*) Atalante di Manetto Migliorotti.

early days of Leo, when Aginensis (*) wished to increase the extent of the tomb—to make it a more imposing monument, that is to say, than it would have been according to the first design I prepared—we drew up a contract; and when I said I did not wish the three thousand ducats I had received to be considered as settlement for the tomb but that there still remained much more to be paid to me, Aginensis told me I was a cheat.

From Florence, . . . [1524].

To Pope Clement VII.,
in Rome.

Most Holy Father,—As intermediaries are very often the cause of serious misunderstandings I now ignore their assistance and write boldly to Your Holiness with reference to the tombs for San Lorenzo here. I have to say that I do not know which is preferable, the misfortune which turns to advantage, or the advantage which turns to misfortune. I am quite sure, witless and worthless though I am, that, if I had been allowed to go on as I began, all the marble for the said work would by now have been in Florence, blocked out in conformity with the requirements, and at a less cost than has already been incurred. It would have been a splendid work like the others I have finished.

(*) Cardinal Lionardo Grosso Della Rovere, nephew of Julius II. The contract here referred to was made on July 8th, 1516, and stipulated that the tomb was to be made according to a new design within a period of nine years. Michelangelo was to receive 16,500 ducats, this sum including the 3,500 already received.

Now I see that it is being spun out at length, nor do I see where it will end. Therefore I would excuse myself with Your Holiness, so that it may not seem that I also am to blame if things do not go in such a way as to please you, for I have no authority in the matter. And, further, if I am to do any work for Your Holiness, I beg that none may be set in authority over me in matters touching my art. I beg that full trust may be placed in me and that I may be given a free hand: Your Holiness shall see the work I will do and the account I will give of myself.

Stefano has finished the lantern over the chapel in San Lorenzo, and has uncovered it: everybody is well pleased with it. I trust that it will prove satisfactory also to Your Holiness when you see it. They are now making the ball which is to surmount it, about a *braccio* in height: for the sake of variety I thought of having it made in facets, and this is being done.

Your Holiness' servant,

MICHELAGNIOLO,
Sculptor, in Florence.

From Florence, [January . . ., 1524].

To Ser Giovan Francesco Fattucci,
in Rome.

MESSER GIOVAN FRANCESCO,—I learn from your last letter that His Holiness our Lord wishes the Libreria to be designed by me. I have heard nothing about this before, and I do not know where he wishes to have it erected, and although Stefano mentioned it to me I did not pay much attention.

When he returns from Carrara I will enquire of him and do the best I can, albeit this is not my calling.

As to the pension of which you write, I do not know what my view will be a year hence, and therefore I am not going to make promises which I might subsequently regret. I have already written to you about the provision.

During this period the Sacristy was steadily proceeding, and the *Ricordi* contain a number of memoranda of payments made to different workmen.

"I record that to-day, the 29th of March, 1524, Maestro Andrea [Ferrucci] da Fiesole, stonecutter and Clerk of Works to the Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore, came to take charge of the work on the tombs I am making in the Sacristy of San Lorenzo; that is to say, to prepare the blocks for the stonedressers. He will spend one hour every day on the work, and whenever necessary he will remain for half a day, or a whole day, for so we have agreed. The said Maestro Andrea asked six ducats a month for doing this, and I offered him four. We shall have to split the difference, so the joiner Baccio says, for he acted as intermediary. The said Messer Andrea has obtained permission from the Overseers [of Santa Maria del Fiore] through Iacopo [Modesti] da Prato."

From Florence, [July . . ., 1524].

To Messer Giovan Francesco Fattucci,
in Rome.

Messer Giovan Francesco,—When I received

your last letter I went off to see Lo Spina, to find out from him whether he has been instructed to pay for the Libreria as well as for the tombs. Finding that he has no such orders, I have as you advised refrained from beginning the said work, for it cannot be done without money. When it is settled that the work is to be done, I beg of you to get it arranged in Rome that the payments here are made by Lo Spina, for it would be impossible to find a more suitable man, or one who would carry out his duties with more zeal and attention.

As for beginning the work, I must wait until the marble arrives; I do not believe it will ever arrive, so great is the confusion! I could write to you of things that would astonish you, only I should never be believed. But enough—it has been my ruin: for had the work been more advanced than is now the case the Pope would have settled my business(*) for me, and I should be rid of all these troubles; but there appears to be much more work involved in destroying a thing than in making it. Yesterday I ran up against a man who told me I was to be made to pay, and that if I had not done so by the end of this month I was going to be punished. I did not believe there was any other punishment beside that of Hell fire, or a couple of ducats by way of a fine, even if I were to set up a silk merchant's or a gold-beater's shop, and were to hire out my earnings as a money-lender. For three hundred years we have paid the taxes in Florence, and at one time, at least, I had the

(*) With respect to the tomb of Julius.

Proconsolo (*) for my friend. However, I shall have to pay. Everything I have will be seized, for I have not the means to pay at present. I shall come to Rome. If the matter had been settled by agreement I would have sold some of my property and invested in the *Monte* in such a way that I could have paid my debts and still have remained in Florence.

From Florence, August 29th, 1524.

To Giovanni Spina.

GIOVANNI,—After I left you yesterday I began to think once more about my affairs. Seeing that the Pope has set his heart on this work at San Lorenzo and how eager His Holiness is to employ me; seeing that of his own free will he has appointed an ample provision for my use in order that I may serve him with more convenience and despatch; and seeing also that not to accept it would turn to my own hurt, and that I should have no excuse for not serving His Holiness: for these reasons I have changed my mind, and whereas hitherto I have refused the provision, I now demand it, considering this to be the best course as well for many other reasons which need not be set down in writing. Above all, I intend to return to the house you took for me at San Lorenzo, and to settle down there like an honest man: for my failure to return has given folks plenty to gossip about, and has done me much harm. I therefore beg of you to let me have that portion of the provision which is due from the day such provision was ordered to

(*) The Rector of the Guild of Judges and Notaries.

be made until the present. If you have instructions to pay this already I beg you to inform Antonio Mini, who works for me and is the bearer of this letter: tell him also when you wish me to come for the money.

Copy made on the day of San Giovanni Decollato, 1524.

From Florence, April 19th, 1525.

[*To Giovanni Spina*,
in Florence].

Giovanni,—With regard to the tomb of Pope Julius, it seems to me unnecessary to send a power of attorney, since I do not wish to go to law. They cannot bring an action against me if I acknowledge myself to be in the wrong. I take the position of having gone to law, lost my case, and been ordered to pay the money, and I am ready to do this if I can. However, if the Pope is willing to help me in this matter as intermediary—which would be a very great boon seeing that I cannot complete the tomb of Julius on account of my age and bodily infirmities—he might express it as his wish that I should pay back what I have received for the work, in order to be free from this burden, and so that the relatives of the said Pope Julius could, with this repayment, have the work executed to their own satisfaction by whomsoever they please. In this manner His Holiness *Nostro Signore*, could render me signal assistance; but at the same time I wish to pay back as little as possible, within reason. They should be made to admit some of my contentions—my time wasted by the Pope in

Bologna and on other occasions, for which I received no payment, as Ser Giovan Francesco [Fattucci] knows, for he is conversant with the whole affair. For my part, as soon as I know what I have to pay I will examine my resources; I will sell out and take such action as will enable me to pay the amount; and then I shall be able to think about the Pope's business, and to get to work once more. As matters stand I cannot live, much less work. There is no other method of procedure which would be more safe for me, more agreeable, or affording greater relief to my mind; and it could be done amicably instead of resorting to the law. I pray God to put in the Pope's heart a willingness to arrange the matter in this way, for it does not seem to me that anyone is compelled of necessity to intermeddle with it. I beg you, therefore, to write to Messer Iacopo [Salviati], adopting such a form as seems to you best calculated to ensure that the matter goes forward, and that I can get to work.

Copy of a minute which I sent to Giovanni Spina, asking him to write to Rome.

On the 19th day of April, 1525.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
Sculptor, in Florence.

From Florence, . . . [1525].

To Giovan Francesco Fattucci,
in Rome.

SER GIOVAN FRANCESCO,—As I do not wish it to be supposed that I am going to make a new tomb for the two thousand ducats mentioned in the contract I

would like you to let Ser Niccolò know that the said tomb is already half made, and that of the six statues mentioned in the contract four are completed—as you already are aware, for you saw them in Rome in the house given me by the heirs of Julius, as appears from the contract.

From Florence, [May . . ., 1525].

[*To Sebastiano del Piombo*,
in Rome.]

Most Dear Sebastiano,—Last night our friend the Capitano Cuio [Dini] and certain other gentlemen were kind enough to invite me to supper with them. It gave me very great pleasure, because it withdrew me somewhat from my melancholy, or rather, folly; and not only did I enjoy the supper, which was exceedingly good, but I enjoyed the conversation which adorned it still more. My delight in their talk was increased still further when I heard the said Capitano Cuio mention your name: nor was this all, for it further rejoiced me beyond measure when I heard the Capitano say that in art you were without an equal, and that you were so considered in Rome. If it had been possible to experience greater pleasure, that pleasure would have been mine. So you see that my judgment has not turned out to be wrong; therefore do not deny that you are peerless when I address you as such, for I have too many witnesses, and—God be praised for it—there is a picture of yours here which wins over to my opinion everyone who has any intelligence.

About this date there appears in the *Ricordi* one of the very few notices dealing with his domestic life. He has evidently given up having men to do the housework, for we find him engaging a certain Mona Lorenza. "I record that to-day, this 16th day of July, 1525, there came into my employ Mona Lorenza, in the house I have taken in the Via Ghibellina. I offered her ten florins a year; she answered me that she did not wish to decide just yet because she says she had a son who is going to Rome within the next fortnight; and when he has gone she will give me an answer. In the meantime she will come here every day to do the housework, returning to her son in the evenings. She says she does not want to be losing her rent; and that as soon as the son has gone away she will make arrangements with me. So much we have agreed upon.

From Florence, September 4th, 1525.

[*To Messer Giovan Francesco Fattucci*,
in Rome.]

MESSER GIOVANFRANCESCO,—I have already written to Rome on previous occasions to say that the work on which I am engaged for Pope Clement is of such a nature that it will take long to finish, and that as I am an old man I cannot expect to be able to execute anything else. As I cannot complete the tomb of Julius I should prefer, if I am called upon to give satisfaction for what I have received, to let that satisfaction be in money instead of in work, as I should not have time for the latter course. I do not know what else to say, because I am not in touch

with the matter and do not know what stage you have reached with it. As to the suggestion of making the tomb of Julius against the wall, like that of Pius, (*) I am in favour of it, and there could be no more expeditious way found of carrying it out. I have nothing more to add except this, that you must now leave my affairs and your own to look after themselves and come back here, for I understand that the plague is raging with great virulence: and I would rather have you alive than get my business settled. Come back, therefore. If I die before the Pope there will be no occasion to settle anything; if I live I am certain the Pope will settle the matter for me, either now or later on. Come back, therefore. Yesterday I was with your mother and I advised her, in the presence of Granaccio and of the turner Giovanni, to make you come back.

On the 4th day of September, 1525.

Your MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Florence.

From Rome, [October . . ., 1525].

To my dear friend, Messere Giovan Francesco [*Fattucci*], priest at Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence, in Rome.

MESSER GIOVAN FRANCESCO,—If I had derived as much strength as I have enjoyment from your last letter I believe I should already have carried out all

(*) The Tombs of Pius II. and Pius III. were at that time in St. Peter's, but have since been removed to the church of Sant' Andrea della Valle.

the works of which you speak: but since I have not that strength I will do as much as I can.

I have meditated as you bade me do—and not a little—concerning the colossus of forty *braccia* which, as I learn from you, is to go—or rather, to be built up—at the corner of the Loggia in the Medici garden, opposite the corner where Messer Luigi della Stufa lives. It does not seem to me that it would go very well in that position, since it would take up too much of the roadway. But, to my way of thinking, it would go much better on the other side, where the barber's shop is, for then it would have the whole Piazza in front of it, and would not encumber the street. And as it might perhaps be found impossible to pull down the shop because the rent would thereby be lost, it has occurred to me that the said figure might be placed in a sitting posture, with the seat placed at such a height that, if it were made hollow inside, as would be the case in such a monument built up of pieces, the barber's shop might be accommodated within it and the rental preserved. And so that the shop may still enjoy its chimney for the escape of the smoke as at present, it has occurred to me that the statue might be holding a cornucopia in its hand, hollowed out for the passage of the smoke. Furthermore, as the head would also be hollow as well as all the other members, I think we might turn it to some advantage, for there is a huckster living in the Piazza, a very great friend of mine, who told me privately that he could make a fine dovecot out of it. But I have another and still better idea, though for this it would be necessary to make the figure even larger: it could

be done however, for towers are only built up of blocks. My idea is that the head should serve as a bell tower for San Lorenzo, which is very much in need of one. Placing the bells inside, whenever the clang of their peals was heard issuing from its mouth, it would appear as though the colossus were crying a-mercy, particularly on feast-days, when the peals are rung more frequently and the larger bells are used.

With regard to the transport of the marble blocks for the above-mentioned statue, it seems to me a good idea—so as to keep the thing a profound secret—to have them brought here by night carefully done up in parcels so that nobody may see them. There would be some difficulty in passing them through the city gates, but even this might be arranged; and if the worst came to the worst they could come through the Porta San Gallo, which is kept half open all the night long.

As to the doing or not doing of such things as have to be done, which you say may be held over, it is better to leave them in the hands of the person who is willing to undertake them, for I shall have so much to do that I shall not want to undertake them myself. It will be quite sufficient for me if I am employed on some worthy task.

I have not replied to your letter in full as Lo Spina will shortly be coming to Rome, and he will tell you all by word of mouth better than I should do in writing, and with more detail.

Your MICHELAGNIOLO,
Sculptor, in Rome.

This letter seems effectually to have killed Pope Clement's scheme for the absurd colossal figure here referred to.

From Florence, October 24th, 1525.

[*To Giovan Francesco Fattucci*, in Rome].

MESSERE GIOVAN FRANCESCO,—In reply to your last letter, the four figures which are in progress are not yet finished and there is still much to be done on them. The four others, the Rivers, are not yet begun as the marble has not yet reached me, though it has already arrived here. I do not give you details because there is no occasion. With regard to the Julius affair, I should be glad to make a tomb like that of Pius in St. Peter's, as you say, and I will execute the work here, little by little, now one piece and now another, and I will pay for it myself, provided that I am allowed to retain my provision and the house, as you say in your letter—that is to say, the house in which I used to live while in Rome—with the marble blocks and the other things there; provided also that, in order to be released from my obligations with regard to the tomb, I am not obliged to give them—I mean the heirs of Pope Julius—anything of what I have received in the past, save only the proposed tomb similar to that of Pius in St. Peter's I must be allowed reasonable time in which to finish it, and I will complete the statues with my own hand. If I am allowed to retain the provision, as already stated, I will never cease to work for Pope Clement with all the strength I have, though that is little, for

I am old: to which I add the condition that I must not be subjected to the same slights as at present, for they have a serious effect upon me, and have already prevented my doing anything I wished for several months past. One cannot work at one thing with the hands, and at another with the brain, especially when marble is concerned. They say here that all this is done to spur me on, but I say that those are useless spurs which only make one turn back. I have not received my provision now for a year past, and I am at hand-grips with poverty. I am very lonely amid my worries, of which I have many; and they occupy more time than my art, since I have not the means to employ anyone to look after me.

This is the copy of the letter which the sculptor, Michelagniolo, sent this 24th day of October, 1525, to Pope Clement, and I, Antonio di Bernardo Mini, have made this copy with my own hand.

From Florence, [April . . ., 1526].

To Messer Giovan Francesco Fattucci,
in Rome.

Messere Giovan Francesco,—During the coming week I shall have the figures already blocked out in the Sacristy covered up, because I want to leave the Sacristy free for the marble masons, whom I wish to build up the other tomb opposite the one already erected. It is all squared work, or nearly so. I have been thinking that the vault might be done while this work is in progress, for, given enough men, I think that it could be finished in two or three months,

Photo Alinari

THE OLD SACRISTY OF THE CAPPELLA MEDICI

though I do not know much about it. At the end of this coming week His Holiness might send Maestro Giovanni da Udine, if he should wish the work to be done now; I shall be quite ready for him.

During this week four of the columns in the recess have been put up, while another was already in position. The niches are not so well forward: however, I think it will be entirely finished in four months' time. The ceiling could be begun at once, but the lime-wood for it is not yet in the proper condition. We shall do our best to let it be as well seasoned as possible.

I am working as fast as I can, and within a fortnight I shall begin work upon the other Captain; (*) after that the only important works remaining to be done will be the four Rivers. The four figures on the sarcophagi, the four figures on the ground—which are the Rivers—the two Captains, and the Madonna which is to be placed over the tomb at the head of the sacristy—these are the figures I should like to carve myself. Six of them are already begun and I am confident that I can finish them in due time, and a part of the others also, which are less important. There is nothing more to tell: commend me to Giovanni Spina and beg him to write to Figiovanni: beg him also not to take away the carters and send them to Pescia, because we should be left without stone. More than this, ask him not to make the stone-cutters

(*) These Captains are, of course, the famous seated figures which are placed above the tombs in the Sacristy of San Lorenzo.

discontented by saying to them in a kindly way: "These people seem to have but little mercy on you, to make you work until the evening in these days when it is dark at the second hour."

It requires a hundred eyes to keep any one man at his work, and even then your efforts may be spoilt by people who are too soft-hearted. Patience! I would to God that things which are not displeasing to Him were not displeasing to me!

From Florence, November 1st, 1526.

To Messer Giovan Francesco Fattucci,
in Rome.

MESSERE GIOVAN FRANCESCO,—I know that Lo Spina has written in very warm terms to Rome in these last few days concerning my business with the tomb of Julius. If he was wrong, seeing the times in which we live, the blame is mine, for without ceasing I urged him to write. Perhaps my anxiety has made me speak too freely. I received information the other day touching this work of mine in Rome which alarmed me greatly; for I learned that the relatives of Julius are very ill-disposed towards me. And I have reason for my alarm because the suit is proceeding, and they are demanding damages and interest on such a scale that a hundred men like myself together could not pay them. This has thrown me into terrible agitation and makes me wonder what would happen if the Pope were to fail me. I could not support it for a moment. It is for this reason I caused the letter to be written, as I have already said. However, I do not want any

settlement that will not be considered satisfactory by the Pope; I know that he wishes neither for my ruin nor for my disgrace. I have watched the slowing down of the work here; I see that the cost is being openly reduced; I am aware that a house is being leased for me at San Lorenzo, while there is also my provision to be paid continually. These are not trivial expenses. If it would be convenient to cut these down as well and to set me at liberty to begin some of the work for the tomb of Julius, here or elsewhere, I should welcome it, for I care more about being rid of this task than I do for life itself. Nevertheless, I have no intention whatever of disobeying the Pope's wishes, provided I know what those wishes are. Therefore I pray you, now that you know my mind, to write and tell me what the Pope does wish, and I will obey him without fail. I beg you to find this out from his own lips and to get his authority to write to me so that I may obey the more readily and with the more affection; and also—should there ever be any occasion for it—so that I may be able to justify my action by producing your letter.

I have no occasion to add more. If I am not able to write coherently, you must forgive me, for I have entirely lost my wits. You know my mind: you will be able to find out the commands I have to obey—let me have a reply, I implore you. On the 1st day of November, 1526.

Your Michelagniolo,
Sculptor, at San Lorenzo in Florence.

Michelangelo's somewhat scanty *Ricordi* reflect the

condition of Florence during the fateful year of 1527 in a curious half light :—

"I record that a few days ago Piero, son of Filippo Gondi, asked permission from me to hide certain things belonging to his family in the new sacristy of San Lorenzo, by reason of the danger which now threatens us. This evening, April 29th, 1527, he began to carry certain bundles there : he says they contain linen clothes belonging to his sisters. As I did not wish to pry into his affairs or to see where he hid the stuff I gave him the key of the sacristy for the evening."

And the next entry tells of domestic worries :—

"I record that to-day, June 4th, 1527, I gave nine *grossoni* to Mona Chiara for her wages ; and that the self-same day she went off, leaving me with no servant, and having given me no warning as to her intentions."

Michelangelo's brother Buonarroto died on July 2nd, 1528, and the expenses of his last illness and funeral fell upon the artist brother's shoulders, as did all the other family expenses, while subsequently he had also to provide for his brother's children.

"Amount paid to Pietro Pagolo di Stefano del Riccio, the apothecary, this 30th day of June, 1528, because of Buonarroto's illness ; that is to say, 13 *lire* 1 *soldo*, as appeareth in the bill drawn up by the said Pietro Pagolo.

"Amount spent for the funeral, and paid by me this 6th day of July, 1528, 50 *lire*. The money was taken to Ser Antonio, the notary, by Antonio Mini, and together they paid it over to the monks and the

priests for wax tapers, and to the grave-diggers, as may be seen from the account of Ser Antonio aforesaid.

"Amount paid to the doctors: 2 ducats 5 *grossoni* to Maestro Piero Rosati, and about 4 ducats to Maestro Baccio, the surgeon [who lives in the Via] degli Alberighi, a ducat to Maestro Marcantonio da Sangimignano, and nine *grossoni* for a 'cappone premuto.'

"Four ducats for a gown for Buonarroto's wife (*), which I bought from Mona Lessandra, Bernardo Mini's widow, so that she might be able to discard her own clothes, which were infected with the pestilence.

"Seven ducats spent at various times at Settignano, including the housekeeping expenses of Buonarroto's wife and children, as well as the servants who had charge of them; not including the wine, which amounted to 4 *barili* (†).

"One ducat spent on shoes, overalls and coifs for the children during the time they were being cared for."

There is also a list of expenses incurred by Michelangelo on behalf of Buonarroto's daughter Francesca, who apparently was in similar need of a new frock before she could be sent to the convent at Boldrone, whither Michelangelo sent her until she was of a

(*) Bartolommea della Casa. The widow of Bernardo Mini here mentioned was the mother of Antonio Mini, Michelangelo's chief assistant at this time.

(†) The *barile* was equal in value to a *giulio*.

marriageable age. Her board and lodging cost him 18 broad ducats per annum. The dress referred to was, we learn, cut from "a cloak lined with lamb-skin, nearly new, belonging to myself, which I caused to be unpicked so as to make a frock for her." The original is "un mio lucco foderato di bassette quasi nuovo."

Then comes expenditure incurred on behalf of Lionardo, the nine-year-old son of Buonarroto who became the hope of the family in later years, and sundry other domestic items connected with the death of Buonarroto. A coat for "Nardo" [Lionardo] cost Michelangelo 8 *lire*, exclusive of the making; then there is an item of one *grossone* for the lad's school-master, apparently to be spent on firing during the winter, together with a silken girdle with tassels which was sent to "Cecca" [Francesca], already safely housed in the Convent at Boldrone. A "Donadello"—that is to say, a Latin primer—for Nardo also figures in the accounts, with a black woolly cap destined for the head of the same favourite nephew. All the expenses seem to have been defrayed by Michelangelo, as we find him paying "three golden ducats to Mona Ginevra for the eighteen days she spent in Buonarroto's house, airing the clothes and the house linen."

On April 6th, 1529, Michelangelo was appointed Superintendent-General of the Florentine defences, the reasons being sufficiently set forth in the resolution adopted by the *Magnifici Signori Dieci*—the Council of War—who governed the State during the siege. The immediate pretext for his appointment is the

necessity for strengthening the defences, "in order to meet the imminent dangers to which not only our own city but all Italy is daily exposed by reason of the frequent irruption of barbarian nations": the particular barbarians in this case being the Medici and the Imperial soldiery. The *Dieci* have considered the merits of many excellent architects, but have finally decided that it would be folly to appoint a foreigner when their own domains could boast of so many men who were fully qualified for the post. "Therefore, having duly considered the zeal and law-abiding character of Michelagnolo di Lodovico Buonarroti, your fellow citizen, and knowing how excellent he is in architecture, to say nothing of his other rare qualities and great skill, which are such that by general consent he is admitted to have no superior; knowing that his loving devotion to his native land is as great as that of any other zealous and patriotic citizen; bearing in mind his past labours and the zeal and affection with which he has until this present time fulfilled the said office without remuneration of any kind: and, finally, wishing to have the advantage of his industry and skill in the office aforesaid for the future—they [the *Dieci*] do of their own free choice, and according to the best means within their power, appoint the said Michelagnolo to be governor-general and superintendent of the erection and fortification of the walls, and of any other defences and provisions which may be necessary within the city of Florence. And this appointment shall be for the space of one year, beginning auspiciously from to-day and ending as it may end.

And he shall have full authority to order and command every person in all matters concerning the repairs of the walls and in all that appertains thereto, etc., with a salary and provision of a broad florin of gold in gold a day and for each day free of all charges: to be chargeable and paid in the manner and form recently established by law for all disbursements payable on behalf of the said magistracy of the *Signori Dieci*."

The strange story of how Michelangelo was prevailed upon to desert his post is told in the following oft-quoted letter.

From Venice, [September 25th, 1529].

To my dear friend Batista della Palla,
in Florence.

BATISTA, DEAR FRIEND,—I left Florence, as I think you know, meaning to go to France; but when I arrived in Venice and enquired the way, I was told that to get there I should have to pass through German territory and that the way was both difficult and dangerous. Therefore I think it well to ask you, at your pleasure, whether you are still of a mind to go; and I beg of you to go. I entreat you to let me know what you have decided, and to say where you wish me to wait for you, and we will travel together. I came away without saying a word to any of my friends and in great confusion. Although, as you know, I wanted in any case to go to France, and had frequently asked permission to go, which I never received, I had intended to remain in Florence until

the end of the war, having no fears for my own safety. But on Tuesday morning, the 21st of September, a certain person came out by the Porta a San Nicolò while I was engaged in inspecting the bastions, and whispered in my ear that I must remain there no longer if I valued my life. He accompanied me to my house, dined there, brought me horses, and never left my side until he had carried me out of Florence, declaring that it was for my good that he so acted. Whether it were God or the devil I cannot say.

I beg of you to answer the foregoing portion of this letter, and as soon as possible, for I am consumed with impatience to be gone from here. If you no longer think of going [to France] still let me know, so that I may provide as best I can for my own journey.

Your Michelagniolo Buonarroti.

The *Ricordi* contain an interesting inventory of the goods removed from Michelangelo's house at the time of this flight from Florence. It is headed "Property put away when I fled to Venice.

"Jesus, on the 19th day of October, 1529.

"Things belonging to Michelangelo which were given into the charge of Caterina and removed from the house on and before the above date, according to the list given me by the said Caterina.

"She says that in one place she stored three *moggia* and twenty *staia* of corn (*); that is to say, 3 *moggia*, 20 *staia*.

(*) The *staio* was equal to about a bushel; the *moggio* represented a rather smaller quantity.

" In the same place, six *staia* of rock salt; that is to say, 6 *staia.*

" In another place she says she stored two *moggia* and twelve *staia;* that is to say, 2 *moggia*, 12 *staia.*

" In the same place she put all the woollen clothes, both wearing apparel and other.

" In the same place there are seven forks and two spoons, these all of silver.

" She tells me that in another place she stored two *moggia* of coarse grain; that is to say, 2 *moggia.*

" Also, she said she sent three *moggia* of barley to the same place; that is to say, 3 *moggia.*

" Also to the same place, one *moggio* of oats; that is to say, 1 *moggio.*

" To another place she says she sent all the pewter, that is to say eleven porringers, eleven saucers and seven dishes, together with certain articles of linen, the latter enclosed in a sack.

" To the same place she sent a bed-tester, a feather bed and a bolster.

" Also, a flock mattress.

" Also, she says she gave Gismondo fourteen *staia* of coarse grain; that is to say, 14 *staia.*

" He also received five barrels of wine, according to what the labourer told me; that is to say, 5 barrels.

" She tells me she sold twenty-seven *staia* of grain for 46 *soldi* the *staio.*

" Also, she says she sold seven barrels of oil, six of them at nine *lire* and four *soldi* the barrel, and one at nine *lire* nett: these to the baker.

" On October 25th, 1529, she says she sold sixteen

staia of grain at 43 *soldi* the *staio;* 16, that is, to pay for the things she sent to Venice.

"Then she says she gave three *lire* to Balena for carrying them; that is to say, 3 *lire.*

"On October 24th, 1529, they brought thirty-eight barrels of wine from Macia: these were brought by Antonio il Balena, who paid all charges for their transport.

"I record that on October 22nd, 1529, thirty-three *lire* seven *soldi* were given to Bastiano di Francesco, stone-mason, as part of his expenses in going to Venice to see Michelagnolo; that is to say, 33 *lire* 7 *soldi.*

"Bernardino di Pier Basso lent him ten *lire;* that is to say, 10 *lire.*

"And I, Francesco Granaccio, lent him nine *lire.*"

So far the entry is in the hand of Granaccio, but after this there comes a memorandum in the writing of Michelangelo himself:—

"I, Michelangelo Buonarroti, found in the house, when I returned from Venice, about five loads of straw. Since then I have bought three more loads. For about a month I kept three horses; now I have only one. On January 6th, 1529 [1530]."

Rome, [June 26th, 1531].

[*To Sebastiano del Piombo,*
in Rome.]

My Dear Sebastiano,—I am giving you too much trouble: bear with me in peace, and recollect that it is a better thing to bring dead men to life than to

paint figures which only seem to live. I have thought many times about the tomb of Julius, as you bade me, and it seems to me there are two ways of getting out of it. One is to finish it, the other to give them the money on the understanding that they are to finish it themselves. We shall have to consult the Pope's pleasure as to which of these alternatives is to be adopted. It is my opinion that the Pope will not care for me to finish it, because then I should not be able to attend to my work for him. Therefore I think he would be inclined to persuade them—I mean those who have charge of this Julius affair—to take the money and carry out the work themselves. I would supply the design and models, and any other assistance I could give would be at their disposal, together with such blocks of marble as may have already been prepared. If the sum of two thousand ducats be added to this I believe that a very beautiful tomb might be produced, and there are a number of young men capable of executing it far better than I could do. If they should adopt this last proposal by accepting the money and doing the work themselves, I could pay them a thousand ducats in gold immediately, and I would find some means of paying the other thousand, but their decision must be acceptable to the Pope. If they are inclined to agree to this last proposal I will write again suggesting a means of raising the other thousand ducats which I believe will not be considered unsatisfactory by them.

I have not given you any minute details as to my position here because I do not think it necessary. I will only tell you that, out of the three thousand

ducats I took to Venice in gold and silver, there only remained fifty ducats when I got back to Florence, for the Commune took from me about fifteen hundred ducats (*). You will therefore understand that I can pay no more, though a way out of the difficulty can be found. That is my hope, seeing the favour promised me by the Pope. Sebastiano, my dearest comrade, I stand resolutely by these proposals, and I beg of you to sift the matter to the bottom.

As the result of the united efforts made on Michelangelo's behalf by Sebastiano del Piombo, Fattucci, and others of his friends with the august sanction of the Pope himself, a new contract was drawn up in connection with the tomb on April 29th, 1532. It was drawn up in the presence of Clement, whose interest in the matter was a personal one because the new contract liberated Michelangelo from nearly all his responsibility with regard to the tomb and left him proportionately free to proceed with the Pope's own schemes. It will be seen that Clement showed himself in favour of the course suggested by the artist, compelling the representatives of Julius to release him from the former contracts upon the conditions outlined in Michelangelo's letter to Sebastiano del Piombo. Michelangelo, his heirs and successors are to be "freed, liberated, and absolved from all contracts and agreements made previous to the date of the present indenture, and from all obligations up to the sum of eight thousand ducats: and all and

(*) As a fine for his desertion in 1529.

every contract, agreement, or convention made prior to the date of the present agreement in connection with the hereinbefore-mentioned tomb which may have been drawn up and agreed to by Julius II. or his executors or any other person is hereby quashed, annulled, and rendered of no effect." Michelangelo, his heirs and successors are given a guarantee that no further claim will at any time be brought against him or them in respect of the tomb. Michelangelo, on his part, promises to make and supply a new model, which is to include the six statues "already begun but not finished"; these he promises to deliver in Rome entirely finished by himself. In addition he promises to pay over the sum of two thousand ducats within three years, beginning from the 1st of August following, part of this sum being represented by the house in Rome with the unfinished statues therein originally begun for the tomb. The Pope promises to allow Michelangelo two months' liberty in each year so that he may go to Rome to inspect the progress of the work, but this period may be longer or shorter according to the pleasure of His Holiness. With the exception of the six statues already mentioned Michelangelo is to be at liberty to employ other artists for the remainder of the work; but it may be noted that it is no longer intended to erect the monument in St. Peter's, since the contract states that the work is to be put up on such site as shall be allotted for the same within the next four months. Finally, there is a penalty clause to the effect that if Michelangelo fails to carry out his share of the contract the present agreement may be declared null and void, while the

heirs of Julius shall be free to enforce the carrying out of the former contracts, compelling the artist to do the work on the larger scale and to execute it all with his own hands.

From Florence, [May . . . , 1532.]

[*To Andrea Quaratesi*,
in Pisa.]

My Dear Andrea,—I wrote to you about a month ago saying I had had the house examined and its value assessed so as to find out what it would fetch in these days: I wrote you further saying that I did not believe you would find a purchaser for the house. As I have to pay two thousand ducats for this Rome affair, which, with sundry other items, will come to three thousand ducats, I was of a mind to let the *lira* go for ten *soldi*, and to sell both houses and possessions, so that I might not be left naked: but I could find no one willing to buy at the time, and I can find no one now, so I think it would be better to wait than to throw it away.

From Florence, . . . [1533].

To Giovan Simone Buonarroti,
at Settignano.

Giovan Simone,—Mona Margerita did not tell you exactly what was said. I was speaking the other morning about thee and about Gismondo while Ser Giovan Francesco [Fattucci] was in the room, and I remarked that I had always exerted myself more on your behalf than on my own, having borne many discomforts so that they might not fall on your

shoulders. I also said that ye had never done otherwise than speak evil of me in all parts of Florence. That is what I said, and I would for all your sakes that it were not the truth, for ye have earned for yourselves the reputation of being ungrateful beasts. As to thy staying on here, I wish thee to do so and to take thine ease, endeavouring to get well again: for as long as I am able I will never fail any of you, because I am governed more by my sense of duty than by anything ye may say about me. I should be glad if thou couldst come here to sleep, so that Mona Margerita could sleep here also; for when my father lay dying he left her in my care and I will therefore never desert her.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Florence.

From Florence, . . . [1533].

GIOVAN SIMONE,—I have a husband in view for Ceca (*): one of the Sachetti, Benedetto by name. He has a brother whose wife is one of the Medici, and another who is a prisoner in the fortress at Pisa. There was also another brother, Albizo by name, but he died in Rome. If thou knowest aught about him I should be glad, before taking any further steps, to learn what thou thinkest of the match. Thou canst send me word by Mona Margerita, but speak not of it to any one else.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in San Lorenzo.

(*) Francesca, the daughter of Buonarroto, who, as we have seen, was placed by Michelangelo in the convent at Boldrone at her father's death.

From Florence, [December . . ., 1534].

To Febo [*di Poggio ?*].

Febo,—Although you hate me so very cordially—I do not know why, though I believe it cannot be due to the love I bear you but rather to the false witness of others in whom you should have put no trust, knowing me as you do—I cannot refrain from writing you these few words. To-morrow I am leaving this place and shall join the Cardinal di Cesis and Messer Baldassarre [Turini] at Pescia: with them I shall go as far as Pisa, and thence to Rome, never to return again to Florence. But I would have you to understand that as long as I live, and wherever I may be, I am always at your service, both more faithful and more loving than any other friend you have in the world.

I pray God that, on a similar occasion arising, your eyes may be opened so that you may come to understand that the man who could value your well-being more than his own health is a man who must love and not hate you as an enemy.

There are no letters between the years 1534 and 1537, and no entries in the *Ricordi*. The only break in the long silence is a Brief from the Pope, Paul III. (who, on October 13th, 1534, succeeded Clement VII.), dated September 1st, 1535, appointing Michelangelo architect, sculptor and painter in chief to the Apostolic Palace:—"te [deputamus] supremum architectum, sculptorem, et pictorem." Michelangelo received this appointment so that he might paint the Universal Judgement in the Sistine Chapel, as is clearly explained

in the Brief; and the same document grants him the revenue accruing from the "Passo del Po" at Piacenza, which formerly had been paid to Giovanni Francesco Burla, since deceased. The appointment was worth six hundred crowns a year, and Michelangelo farmed it out to Francesco Durante for the sum of five hundred and fifty crowns. In the *Ricordi*, too, under date of January 2nd, 1537, there is an entry to the effect that Michelangelo has received from Messer Francesco Durante of Piacenza the sum of ninety-one and a third crowns in gold, being the amount due for the two months, October and November.

From Rome, [September . . ., 1537].

[*To Messer Pietro Aretino*,
in Venice.]

MAGNIFICENT MESSER PIETRO, MY LORD AND BROTHER,—The receipt of your letter gave me both joy and sorrow: joy because it came from you who have no equal in the world for talent, and much sorrow because, as I have already finished a large part of the fresco, it is too late for me to adopt your conception of the matter, although it is so splendid that if the Day of Judgement had actually arrived and you had seen it with your own eyes you could not have described it better in words. Now as to your writing about me, I reply that I not only desire it but I beg of you to do so, for Kings and Emperors esteem it the greatest honour to be mentioned by your pen. In the meantime, if I have anything you would care to possess I offer it to you with all my heart. In

Photo Anderson

ARETINO

After the picture by Titian in the Pitti Gallery

conclusion, do not break through your resolution never to set foot in Rome on account of the picture I am painting, for it would be too great an honour. I recommend myself to you.

MICHEL'AGNOLO (*sic*) BUONARROTI.

From Rome, . . ., [1540 (?)].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I have received a letter from Gismondo in which he asks me to instruct my agents in Florence to give him nine bushels of grain. I do not know who these same agents of mine may be, but I do know that I have never given more to one than to another. Tell Mona Margerita, therefore, that she is to give him whatever she can spare, and tell him from me that he has done himself but little honour in sinking to the level of a farm-hand. Tell Mona Margerita, further, that she is not to give anything away to anybody save to members of the family, for I do not wish any one to be able to go to her, take charge of my affairs and dictate to her what she is to do, as Donato del Sera did. He had no instructions whatever from me, and I did not owe him a single *scudo*. Tell her this from me, and tell her to be of good cheer: for thyself, strive to become a man of worth.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

This is the first of the letters from Michelangelo to his nephew Lionardo Buonarroti. He was born on September 25th, 1519, and was, as already noted, the son of Buonarroto Buonarroti.

From Rome, [July . . ., 1540]

To Lionardo Buonarroti,
in Florence.

Lionardo,—I have received thy letter and with it the three shirts. I am very much surprised that ye should have sent them to me, for they are so coarse that there is not a farm labourer here who would not be ashamed to wear them. Even if they had been made of thinner material I wish ye had not sent them: when I want shirts I will send the money to buy them. With regard to the farm at Pazzolatica, within fifteen or twenty days I will have seven hundred ducats paid to Bonifazio Fazi for the purchase thereof; but first it will be necessary to see what arrangement Michele has made, so that thy sister, if ever she has occasion to do so, may be able to withdraw the amount of her dowry which is invested in the farm. However, thou hadst better discuss it with Gismondo and then write to me; for unless I feel assured that there is good security for the seven hundred ducats I shall not send the money. I have nothing further to add. Exhort Mona Margerita to be of good cheer, and see that thou treat her well both in word and deed: behave in all things as an upright man should, otherwise I will make it clear to thee that thou shalt enjoy no share of anything that is mine.

Michelagniolo,
in Rome.

The Michele in this letter is Michele di Niccolò Guicciardini, who married Francesca, Buonarroto's

daughter, in 1537. By way of dowry Michelangelo gave her the farm of Capiteto, at Pozzolatico, but subsequently bought it back for the sum of seven hundred ducats.

From Rome, August 7th, 1540.

GIOVAN SIMONE,—This morning, the 7th of August, 1540, I paid six hundred and fifty crowns of gold in gold to Bartolomeo Angelini, and this sum will be handed over to you in Florence by Bonifazio Fazi for the purchase of the farm at Pazzolatica. Therefore, as soon as you have explained this to Michele [Guicciardini], and Bonifazio tells you he is authorised to pay out seven hundred ducats at seven *lire* the ducat in exchange for a duly executed receipt, you will be able to take possession of the farm without further delay. Thou or the priest [Fattucci] had best go to discuss it with Bonifazio, and he will tell you all there is to know.

I take this opportunity of informing you that since I came to Rome I have sent about two thousand ducats to Florence, this last sum included; and that for every amount I sent I have paid cash to Bartolomeo Angelini. As I do not keep my business letters, and as we are all doomed to die and to be succeeded by a new generation, I would like a record to be kept, for the information of those who may come after to bear our name, so that it will always be easy to find out how much money has been contributed by myself. If it be permissible, therefore, I would like thee to talk the matter over with Bonifazio, to whom the money has always been made payable, asking

him to keep his accounts in such a manner that it may be clear in every case that it was I who paid the money. I have nothing further to add on this head. Take good care of Mona Margerita, and tell her that if we buy these two farms she will be able to keep a servant, as I have already said.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

From Rome, [November . . ., 1540].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto.

LIONARDO,—Michele writes to say that he wishes me to send a power of attorney to Florence for the purpose of taking over the farm at Pazzolatica from him. I have appointed Giovansimone and Gismondo as my representatives, and he can hand it over to them. I enclose herewith the power of attorney. Give it to them so that they may take over the farm from Michele and obtain his receipt for the money paid to him.

I have learned of Mona Margerita's death with very great sorrow, even more than if she had been my sister, for she was a worthy woman and had grown old in our service. Since our father left her to my care I was desirous, God knows, to do something for her: but it was not His will that she should wait so long. We must bow to His ordinances. As to the care of the house now, ye will have to arrange that for yourselves: it is useless to look to me, because I am old and have the greatest difficulty in getting my own needs attended to. Ye are sufficiently well provided for, if ye can live peacefully together, to be

able to keep a capable servant and to live like gentlemen. If ye do this I will help you as long as I live: if ye do not, I wash my hands of you.

I would like thee to go to the said Michele and find out how much remains of the money he spent on the cattle for Pazzolatica and on the house. The taxes which, according to his letter, have been paid by him are to be allowed for.

Your MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

From Rome, January 19th, 1542.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

Although I have already written to the priest [Fattucci] I intended to write to thee concerning the same matter: then I had no time for it, besides which writing is a trouble to me. I send thee enclosed the letter I wrote to the priest: it is not sealed, and thou wilt learn from it all I wished to tell thee; that is to say, that I am sending thee fifty crowns of gold in gold with instructions as to what thou must do if thou desirest to come to Rome, and how thou art to take care of the money. I also said that I would send thee another fifty if thou wouldst decide not to come. The fifty gold crowns in gold I am sending were despatched this morning, January 19th, by Urbino, (*) who is in my service, to Bartolomeo Bettini—that is to say, to Cavalcanti and Giraldi. The letter of advice will be

(*) Francesco degli Amadori, of Urbino Michelangelo's faithful servant and friend for twenty-five years.

enclosed in this. Take it to the Salviati and they will pay thee the money: give them a discharge in the proper form—that is to say, "for so much money received from me in Rome."

Read the letter I wrote to the priest and then give it to him, or thou hadst better give it to him first and get him to read thee what I have said with regard to thy coming or not coming here. If thou shouldst decide to come, let me know beforehand so that I may speak to some trustworthy muleteer and arrange for thee to accompany him: and, also, if thou decidest to come, do not let Michele know of it as I have no means of offering him hospitality, as thou wilt see for thyself if thou comest.

Michele has written asking me to send nine ducats and two-thirds which he says is the balance due for the transfer of the farm at Pazzolatica. He has written about it before, but the priest, after going through the accounts with him, says there is nothing more owing. Therefore I would have thee ask the priest to tell thee, or to let me know in writing, whether I have anything to pay or not.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

There are one or two letters to Lionardo for the year 1541, most of them in reply to letters in which Lionardo asks permission to visit his uncle in Rome, in company with his brother-in-law Michele. Michelangelo uses every argument to put them off, urging that he is entirely alone and that if they were to come he would have to go into the kitchen and cook their meals for them himself.

From Rome, January 20th, 1542.

To Messer Niccolò Martelli,

in Florence.

Messer Niccolò,—I received your letter from Messer Vincenzo Perini with two sonnets and a madrigal. The letter and the sonnet in my honour are so admirable that no better punishment could be found for any one than to be compelled to find something wrong with your words. To tell the truth, you bestow such praises upon me that if all the virtues of Paradise were locked up in my breast they would fall far short of what you attribute to me. I perceive that you have imagined me to be as God wished me to be. I am a simple man and of little worth, spending my time in striving to give expression to the art God gave me, in order to prolong my life for as long as I am able. Such as I am, I am your servant and the servant of all who bear the name of Martelli. I thank you for your letter and for the sonnets, but not as much as I ought for the reason that I am unequal to the task. I am ever yours to command.

From Rome, on the XX. day of January, in the year XLII.

Michelagniolo Buonarroti.

From Rome, February 4th, 1542.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto.

Lionardo,—Thou writest that thou hast decided not to come and that thou wilt keep the fifty crowns until I send the other fifty so as to put all of it into the shop together. I will send the money to thee

immediately, but first of all I wish to hear the opinions of Giovan Simone and of Gismondo, as I would like them to be made parties to this investment in the shop so that it may be done properly, as I have already said, by them and with their consent, for they are my brothers. I shall therefore write to them about it. Tell them they are to let me know what they advise, and I shall not fail thee in the fulfilment of my promise.

I wrote to thee saying Guicciardino had asked for nine crowns—or rather ducats—and two-thirds which he says are still owing to him for the transfer of the farm at Pazzolatica, and I asked thee to find out whether I ought to pay this or no. Thou hast never given me an answer: beg Messer Giovan Francesco, therefore, to say whether it is right that I should pay, and write to me so that I may send the money. No more.

On the 4th day of February, 1542.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

There are a number of letters at this period addressed to Luigi del Riccio, one of Michelangelo's few friends in Rome, but they refer for the most part to the interchange of courtesies, sonnets, madrigals, etc.

From Rome, July 20th, 1542.

Petition to Pope Paul III.

Whereas Messer Michelagnolo Buonarroti undertook some time ago to make the tomb of Pope Julius

in San Piero in Vincula, under certain conditions and agreements duly set forth in a contract drawn up by Messer Bartolomeo Cappello under date of April 18th, 1532: and whereas, by reason of his being subsequently called upon and compelled by His Holiness Our Lord Pope Paul III. to work upon and paint his own chapel, he is unable to continue with the task of furnishing the tomb as well as the said painting in the chapel: through the mediation of His Holiness a new covenant has therefore been made with the Most Illustrious Lord Duke of Urbino, to whom has fallen the charge of the said tomb, as may be seen from a letter of his bearing date the 6th day of March, 1542. In this letter it was agreed that, of six statues which are to form part of the said tomb, the beforementioned Messer Michelagnolo should be at liberty to entrust three to a good and renowned master who should carve them and set them in their places; and the other three, among them being the statue of Moses, he agreed to furnish complete with his own hand. It was also agreed that the framework was to be carried out in the same manner—that is to say, the remainder of the decoration of the said tomb—in accordance with the beginning already made. Wherefore, in order to carry out the said agreement, the aforesaid Michelagnolo entrusted the making of three statues, which were already well forward—that is to say, a standing figure of Our Lady with the Child in her arms and seated figures of a Prophet and a Sybil—to Raffaello da Montelupo, a Florentine, considered to be one of the best masters of the day: and for these works the said Raffaello was to have the sum

of four hundred crowns, as appeareth from the covenant made between them. In like manner the remainder of the framework and ornamental details of the tomb, with the exception of the topmost pediment, were entrusted to Maestro Giovanni de' Marchesi and Francesco [degli Amadori] da Urbino, stone-cutters and carvers, for the sum of seven hundred crowns, as appeareth from the agreement also made between them. There would still remain the three figures which he [Michelangelo] was to supply with his own hand, that is to say, a Moses and two captives; and these three figures are nearly finished. But forasmuch as the said two captives were made when it was proposed to erect the tomb on a much larger scale and with a greater number of statues; and forasmuch as this design has been cut down and reduced in size by the terms of the contract aforesaid: for these reasons the said statues are no longer suited to the design, and could not in any wise look well therein. Desiring not to fall short of his duty, the said Messer Michelagnolo has accordingly set to work upon two other statues which are to go on either side of the Moses, representing Contemplative Life and Active Life; and these figures are so well forward that they could very well be finished by other masters. And as the aforesaid Messer Michelagnolo is now once more requested and urged by His Holiness Our Lord Pope Paul the Third to work upon and finish his chapel, as hereinbefore rehearsed; and as the said work is a great one calling for the undivided attention of some person free from all other obligations; and as, moreover, the said

Messer Michelagnolo is old and desirous of serving His Holiness to the utmost of his abilities, being as well required and compelled to fulfil the same (which he cannot do unless he is first set free from all obligations with respect to this tomb of Julius which daily involves him in bodily and mental vexations) : the said Michelagnolo now makes supplication to His Holiness, seeing that he is resolved that he shall enter his service, to arrange with the Most Illustrious Lord Duke of Urbino so that he may be set entirely free from the said tomb, and that all contracts between them may be annulled and set aside under the following reasonable conditions. Firstly the said Messer Michelagnolo craves permission to entrust the other two figures which have still to be finished to the aforesaid Raffaello da Montelupo, or to any other artist at the discretion of His Excellency, for a just price hereafter to be agreed upon, which he believes will be about two hundred crowns. The Moses he undertakes to finish himself. Furthermore, he is willing to place on deposit the whole of the moneys which will be required of him for the completion of the work, although it will be a great inconvenience to him, and the work has already cost him a great deal : that is to say, he will pay over such moneys as have not already been paid to Raffaello da Montelupo in respect of the three statues entrusted to him, as already rehearsed,—the amount being about three hundred crowns—together with such other moneys as have still to be paid for furnishing the framework and ornaments,—the amount being about five hundred crowns—and the two hundred

crowns, or such other sum as may be necessary, for the remaining two figures, with a further hundred ducats which are to be spent upon the crowning pediment of the said tomb. The total sum of from 1,100 to 1,200 crowns, or such other sum as may be required, he is ready to deposit with a reliable bank in Rome in the name of the aforesaid Most Illustrious Lord Duke, in his name and in the name of the work; with the express understanding that this money is to be used for the expenses of the tomb and for no other purpose whatsoever, and that for no other cause is it either to be touched or withdrawn. And he is willing in so far as he is able, in addition to the above conditions, to superintend the execution of the said statues and the other works and to see that they are carried out with proper care; so that by these means His Excellency may rest assured that the work will be brought to a conclusion and that the money for the purpose will be forthcoming. Moreover, his agents will be free at all times to push the work forward and to secure its completion; and this is much to be desired, as Messer Michelagnolo is very old and has so much to do that it will be difficult for him to complete what he has already undertaken, to say nothing of executing fresh works. And Messer Michelagnolo shall be left entirely free and shall be at liberty to carry out and fulfil the wishes of His Holiness, whom he hereby entreats to write to His Excellency asking him to give the requisite instructions and empower some person with sufficient authority to free him from all contracts and obligations as at present existing between them.

The final contract for the tomb was made on August 20th, 1542. It describes how the earlier documents were set aside by the agreement made during the pontificate of Clement, and containing fresh conditions "which for sufficient and legitimate reasons the said Michelagnolo has hitherto been unable to fulfil, *presertim* because he was engaged in painting the Sistine chapel in the Apostolic Palace. As the said Messer Michelagnolo will be unable for the future to attend to the construction of the tomb by reason of his services being required by His Holiness Our Lord Pope Paul III. for the decoration of his new chapel, and as by reason of his age he can neither work at sculpture nor painting, he desires to be set entirely free from his obligations and from the conditions in the said contract of April 28th, 1532, contained. Wherefore he has recently made a fresh agreement with His Excellency the aforesaid Lord Duke of Urbino, as appeareth in a letter from him, dated March 6th, 1542, and addressed to the said Messer Michelagnolo." Once more the contract of 1532 is solemnly declared to be null and void, as are all previous agreements between the parties, in return for the sum of 1,400 crowns which Michelangelo had deposited in the bank of Messer Silvestro da Montauto [Montalto] and Partners in Rome, in the name and for the use of His Excellency, for the completion of the tomb and for the works appertaining thereto. This sum is not to be touched for any other purpose save for the completion of the tomb. 800 crowns are to go to Francesco d'Urbino for such part of the

framework as still remains to be made, and 550 to Raffaello da Montelupo for the five statues he has to finish. Michelangelo engages to finish the Moses himself at his own expense. In return for these payments in money and kind Michelangelo is to be freed, as already said, from all obligations he may have entered into with respect of the work, and he is given an assurance that no further claim shall ever be preferred by the Duke or by any other person in his name, and the Ambassador pledges the Duke to ratify the agreement by a public deed, to be delivered to Michelangelo within fifteen days.

From Rome, [October . . ., 1542].

To Messer Luigi del Riccio.

Messer Luigi, Dear Friend, — Messer Pier Giovanni has been persistently urging me to begin the painting [in the Pauline Chapel]. It may readily be seen, however, that this is impossible for the next four or six days, as the plaster is not yet sufficiently dry for me to begin operations. But there is another thing that vexes me far more than the plaster, something that prevents me from living, to say nothing of painting—I mean the delay in drawing up the ratification setting aside the contracts. I feel that I have been cheated, and as a result I am in a state of desperation. I have wrung from my heart 1,400 crowns which would have enabled me to work for seven years, during which I could have made two tombs, let alone one: and I only did it so that I might obtain peace and be free to serve the Pope with my whole heart. Now I find myself deprived of the

money and face to face with more troubles and anxieties than ever. I did what I did about the money because the Duke [of Urbino] agreed to it, and in order to get the ratification drawn up: now that I have paid the money I cannot obtain the ratification, so that it is easy to guess what all this means without my having to write it down. Enough; it is only what I deserve for having believed in other people for thirty years and for having placed myself freely at their service: painting, sculpture, hard work and too much faith have ruined me, and everything goes from bad to worse. How much better it would have been if in my early days I had been set to make sulphur matches, for then I should not have all this anxiety! I write thus to *vostra Signoria* because, as one who wishes me well and who knows all about the matter and therefore knows the truth, you can inform the Pope what is happening, and then he may perhaps understand that I cannot live, much less paint. If I promised to begin the work, it was in the expectation of receiving the said ratification, which ought to have been given to me a month ago. I will not support this burden any longer, nor will I submit to be abused and called a swindler daily by those who have robbed me of life and honour. Only death or the Pope can save me now from my troubles.

Your Michelagniolo Buonarroti.

The ratification mentioned is that promised by the Duke of Urbino, freeing him from further obligations with respect to the tomb.

"Messer Pier Giovanni" in this letter is Pier

Giovanni Aliotti, bishop of Forlì, whom Michelangelo nick-named Monsignore Tantecose, *My Lord Busy-body*.

This letter is followed by a long and very minute account of all that had happened in the past history of the tomb of Julius. It was written in October 1542, and addressed to one of the Cardinals, though it is not made clear to which of them Michelangelo sent his heart-rending appeal for justice.

"MONSIGNORE,—Your Lordship has sent to me saying I am to begin painting and to have no fear. My answer is that a man paints with his brains and not with his hands, and if he cannot have his brains clear he will come to grief. Therefore I shall be able to do nothing well until justice has been done me. The ratification of the last contract is not forthcoming, and under the terms of the other, which was drawn up in Clement's presence, I am daily pilloried as though I had crucified the Christ. I maintain that I did not know the said contract was read over to Pope Clement in the same form as the copy I afterwards received, the reason being that Clement sent me to Florence that very day, and the Ambassador, Gianmaria da Modena, went to the notary and had the scope of the contract extended to suit his own ends. When I came back and went to see the deed I found that it authorised the demanding of a thousand ducats more than it had done before: I found that it swallowed up the house I live in, with many another barbed shaft, all meant to goad me to my ruin. Clement would never have countenanced this."

He goes on to deny the alleged liabilities and urges

on his own behalf all the work he did for Julius at Bologna and elsewhere as long as he served him, "which was all the time he was Pope." He says further that the old Duke of Urbino, Francesco Maria della Rovere, wished to let the whole scheme drop.

"When the above-mentioned contract was made in the presence of Clement Gianmaria, the old Duke's ambassador, told me on my return from Florence that if I wished to do the Duke a good turn I should go away altogether because he took no interest whatever in tombs of any kind, although he wished to prevent my working for Pope Paul. Then it was that I understood why my house had been put into the contract. It was so that I might be got rid of, and they, by virtue of the agreement, would then have been free to take possession of the house."

He complains that he has "wasted all his youthful years tied to this tomb with only such relief as could be afforded by Leo and Clement." Then he returns once more to the subject of the painting.

"But to return to the painting. There is nothing I can deny to Pope Pagolo [Paul]: but I shall paint discontentedly, and all that I paint will bear the mark of discontent. I have written thus to your Lordship so that when occasion arises you will be able to tell the Pope the truth. Also I should very much like the Pope to know all about it, so that I may find out what is the strength of the forces ranged against me in this conflict. He that can understand, let him understand.

"Your Lordship's servant,

"MICHELAGNIOLO.

[P.S.]—"There is another thing I wish to say, and

it is that the Ambassador declares I have used the Pope's money for money-lending purposes and that I have grown rich on the proceeds, as though I had actually received the eight thousand ducats from the Pope. The money mentioned as having been received by me refers to the amount spent up to that time on the tomb, which, as may be seen, would come to about the same sum as that mentioned in the contract made in the time of Clement: for in the first year of Julius' pontificate, when he gave me the contract for making the tomb, I spent eight months at Carrara quarrying the blocks which I subsequently transported to the Piazza di San Pietro, where I had a workshop behind the church of Santa Caterina. Afterwards Pope Julius did not want to proceed with the tomb during his own life, and set me to paint: then he kept me at Bologna for two years working on the Bronze Pope which later was destroyed: then I went to Rome and remained in his service till he died, keeping open house all the time, without friends and without salary, living upon the money for the tomb, as I had no other source of income. Then came Pope Leo, who, not wishing me to make the tomb, pretended that he was going to build the façade of San Lorenzo in Florence. He begged me of Aginensis, therefore, who was compelled to set me at liberty but stipulated that I was still to go on with the tomb of Julius while in Florence. Then while I was in Florence occupying myself with the façade of San Lorenzo, I found I had not sufficient marble for the tomb of Julius in Florence, so I went back to Carrara for thirteen months, brought back all the necessary

blocks to Florence, built a workshop, and set to work. About that time Aginensis sent Messer Francesco Palavisini—now Bishop of Aleria—to hurry me up. He inspected my workshop and saw all the marble and the figures which were blocked out for the said tomb, as they are still to be seen to-day. When this became known, that is, when it became known that I was working on the tomb, the Medici who was then in Florence—he afterwards became Pope Clement—forbade me to go on with it, and matters remained in that state until Medici became Clement. Then the last contract but one was made, in his presence; the contract in which it is alleged that I have received the eight thousand ducats I am supposed to have laid out at usury. I have a fault to confess to your Lordship; for when I stayed those thirteen months at Carrara in connection with the tomb I ran short of money and spent on this work a thousand ducats of the money Pope Leo had given me for the façade of San Lorenzo—or rather, he gave it me to keep me occupied. Then I wrote to him saying how difficult my work was. I did so because I was so enthusiastic over what I had in hand. But I have had my reward in being called a thief and a money-lender by people who must be the most ignorant in the world.

"I write this long history to your Lordship because I am almost as anxious to justify myself in your eyes as in the Pope's; for according to what Messer Piergiovanni [Aliotti] writes, you have been told lies about me to such an extent that he was obliged to speak in my favour. Another reason is that when

your Lordship finds an occasion for it, you will be able to put in a good word for me, for what I am saying is the truth. In my dealings with my fellow men—I will not say with God—I consider myself to be an honest man, for I never deceived any one, although one must sometimes go nearly mad, as you must realise, in protecting one's self against the attacks of spiteful persons.

"I beg your Lordship to read this history when you have time and to keep it for my sake, remembering that there are witnesses available to prove practically all I have said. I should also be very glad if the Pope could see it—nay, I would like all the world to see it, because what I have written is the truth. I have scarcely done justice to my case: I am not a thieving money-lender but a citizen of Florence, born of noble stock and the son of an honest man. I am not of Cagli.

"After I had written I received a message from the Urbinate Ambassador, saying that if I wanted the ratification I could get it by first purging my conscience of its burden. I tell you that he must have thought the Michelagnolo he was dealing with was made of the same stuff as himself.

"To proceed with the story of the tomb, I repeat that he [Julius] subsequently changed his mind about having it made during his own life as he had originally intended; and when sundry barge-loads of marble which had been ordered from Carrara some time before arrived at Ripa, I could not get any money from the Pope because he had decided not to go on with the work. I had to pay the freightage, between

a hundred and two hundred ducats, with money borrowed from Baldassarre Balducci—from Messer Iacopo Gallo's bank, that is—for the purpose of discharging the said account. Then a number of masons whom I had engaged in Florence to work on the tomb arrived in Rome, some of whom are still living, and as I had already furnished the house Julius gave me at the rear of Santa Caterina with beds and other household necessities for the masons and for the other work connected with the tomb, I found myself in dire straits for lack of money. I urged the Pope to allow the work to proceed as far as possible, and one morning when I went to discuss the matter with him he caused me to be turned out by one of his postilions. The Bishop of Lucca, who witnessed the act, said to the postilion :—'Do you not know who that is?' to which the postilion replied :—'Pardon me, Sir, but I have been ordered to act as I am doing.' I went home and wrote to the Pope as follows :—'Most holy Father: this morning I was driven from the Palace by your Holiness' orders: I give you to understand that from henceforth if you desire my services you must seek them elsewhere than in Rome.' I sent this letter to Messere Agostino, the seneschal, who was to give it to the Pope. Then I sent for a certain joiner named Cosimo to come to me, a man who used to work for me and look after the house, as well as for a stonemason who is still living and who was also in my service at the time. To these men I said :—'Go and fetch a Jew: sell all the house contains and follow me to Florence.' I went out and took the post, departing in the direction of Florence.

As soon as the Pope received my letter he sent five horsemen after me, who came up with me at Poggi Bonsi about the third hour of the night, and presented a letter to me from the Pope of the following tenor :— 'Immediately on receipt of this present thou must return to Rome on pain of Our displeasure.' The horsemen desired me to send a reply in order to show that they had delivered the letter; so I said that as soon as the Pope would carry out his obligations towards me I would return, otherwise he need never expect to see me again. And afterwards, while I was living in Florence, Julius sent three Briefs to the Signoria concerning me. At last the Signoria sent for me and said :—'We cannot go to war with Pope Julius on thine account : thou must go back. If thou wilt return to him we will give thee a letter making it clear that any injury done to thee will be treated as an injury done to Us.' In order to please them I went back to the Pope; and it would take a long time to narrate all that happened afterwards. Let it suffice that I lost more than a thousand ducats over it, for directly I had left Rome there was a great disturbance, be it said to the Pope's shame; nearly all the marble I had collected in the Piazza di San Pietro was stolen, especially the small pieces, and I had to replace them subsequently. In short, I maintain and affirm that in respect of damages and interest I am entitled to receive five thousand ducats from the heirs of Julius. Yet the very people who robbed me of my youthful years, my honour, and my possessions now call me a thief! And at the end of it all, as I have said already, the Ambassador from Urbino sends

word that I am to purge my conscience and then the Duke will send the ratification. He did not speak like that before he made me deposit the 1,400 ducats. If there is any inaccuracy in all that I have written it is only in the matter of dates. Everything else is the truth—it is even more true than I have written it (*è vera, meglio che io non scrivo*).

"I entreat your Lordship, for the love of God and of truth, to read these paragraphs when you have time, so that when the occasion arises you will be able to defend me against those who speak evil of me before the Pope without knowing anything about the matter, and who have given the Duke of Urbino to understand that I am a great scoundrel by their representations. All the disagreements that arose between Pope Julius and myself were due to the jealousy of Bramante and of Raffaello da Urbino : it was because of them that he did not proceed with the tomb during his own life, and they brought this about in order that I might thereby be ruined. Yet Raffaello was quite right to be jealous of me, for all he knew of art he learnt from me."

From Rome, April 14th, 1543.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

Lionardo,—I learn from thy letter as well as from the priest [Fattucci] what was done with the contract in order to secure its safe delivery into my hands. It has not arrived, of that I am quite certain, for Bettino would have sent it to me here at my house, so I suppose it was held back by the bankers to whom

thou gavest it. If thou desirest me to have it, give it to Francesco d'Antonio Salvetti and tell him to send it to Luigi del Riccio. It will then be delivered to me without delay, and I will ratify it. I have nothing more to add. I have not written to the priest as I have had no time. Commend me to him and thank him for the trouble he has taken and we given. When thou writest to me do not address thy letters to *Michelagniolo Simoni*, and do not put *sculptor* after my name. It is sufficient to put *Michelagniol Buonarroti*, for that is the name by which I am known here. Tell the priest to do the same.

On the 14th of April, 1543.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, [March 29th, 1544].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I learn from thy letter that the marble has been valued at a hundred and seventy crowns, (*) also what is to be done with the money when it is paid over. If my brothers agree, I think it ought to be invested in some shop for thy benefit, the choice being left to their discretion: and it should be done in such a way that thou mayst receive the honest fruit thereof, but wilt be unable to touch the capital without their consent. I think also that thou shouldst endeavour to sell the workshop where the aforesaid marble is stored, investing the money in

(*) The marble, that is, which lay in Michelangelo's house in the Via Mozzi in Florence.

the same way and in the same place as that to be received for the marble. Afterwards I shall be able to add other sums to the total, but this will depend upon thy behaviour, for it seems to me that thou hast not yet even learnt to write properly.

I have answered Messer Giovan Francesco with respect to the head of the duke,(*) saying that I cannot possibly attend to the matter. This is the truth, for I am prevented by my present anxieties, but still more by old age, as I can scarcely see.

As to my buying that farm from Luigi Gerardi about which thou hast had information sent to me, it does not appear advisable for me to buy more property in Florence than I already possess: for to have over much property is to have over much anxiety, especially now that I cannot make use of it myself. Therefore I think it wiser to buy elsewhere so that I can enjoy the fruits thereof in my old age, for since I cannot work for him the provision given me by the Pope may be taken from me any day. I have already had to defend my claim to it on two occasions. Thou hadst better, therefore, give the priest thine answer and get him to write to me about it. I have nothing further to add. Strive to do well.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

From Rome, July 7th, 1544.

LIONARDO,—I have been ill: and thou, at the instigation of Ser Giovan Francesco, hast come

(*) A proposed bust of Cosimo de' Medici, Duke of Florence.

here to try and put an end to me and to find out whether I have left anything. Hast thou not already enough of my belongings in Florence to satisfy thee? Thou canst not deny that thou art like thy father, who drove me from home in Florence. Learn that I have made my will in such a form that it will be waste of time for thee to cast thine eyes on what I have here in Rome. Go, and God be with thee: do not come into my sight again: do not ever write to me again, but follow the example of the priest.

MICHELAGNIOLO.

It should be noted here that Michelangelo had been seriously ill, and that Lionardo went to Rome to see for himself how his uncle fared. As will be seen from this letter, Michelangelo was greatly enraged at his nephew's visit.

From Rome, Decemb er6th, 1544.

To Giovan Simone and Gismondo.

I have been thinking of late that I would invest sums of money from time to time, amounting in all to a thousand crowns, in a wool merchant's business for Lionardo's benefit, if he behaves himself properly, with the understanding that he will not be free to withdraw the money or to convert it to any other use without your permission. I have arranged to begin with a sum of 200 crowns, which I will have paid to you in Florence, if ye agree with my suggestion. If ye do so agree, see to it that the money is not invested in a precarious concern, for I did not pick the money up in the street. Let me hear what

ye think of the proposition: ye are in a position to judge of Lionardo's character better than I, and ye can tell me if it would be wise to do as I propose.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

There is one more letter to Giovan Simone, in which the writer sympathises with him in his illness. Giovan Simone died in 1548.

From Rome, [December 27th, 1544].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I have handed 200 crowns over to Covoni's bank here so that the money may be paid to you in Florence for the purpose mentioned in my last letter. Go, therefore, either with Gismondo or Giovan Simone, to the Capponi and ye will receive the money; that is to say, ye will receive 200 gold crowns in gold, the same as I paid here. It is my intention that Giovan Simone and Gismondo shall invest this money in their own names for thy benefit with any firm of wool merchants ye may consider to be sound. I do not wish my name to be mentioned in the matter at all. The conditions I impose are these, that the interest is to come to thee for thine own use but the capital sum shall neither be withdrawn, transferred, nor in any other way touched unless all three of you have agreed to the change, Giovan Simone, Gismondo and thyself. Before the money is invested in the business I should like thee

to call in Michele Guicciardini,(*) so that he may be present with Giovan Simone and Gismondo to see that the documents are drawn up in due form : this is to be done to avoid mistakes, for I believe he understands these matters. He will willingly do it for my sake. Afterwards, see that Giovan Simone and Gismondo write to me acknowledging the receipt of the money and saying how the business has been arranged. Salute Michele in my name. Should neither Giovan Simone nor Gismondo be able to accompany thee when thou goest for the money, thou must go alone and take it to them so that they may do with it as I have already said.

And when thou givest Capponi the receipt for the said money make a note thereon that it is for so much money received from the Covoni on behalf of Michelagniolo in Rome.

I enclose Covoni's letter to the Capponi which authorises the payment of the money.

Send me a copy of the agreement referring to this investment as soon as the affair is settled.

In Rome on the 27th day of December, one thousand five hundred and forty-four, *ad Incarnatione*.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, February 3rd, 1545.

[*To Messer Salvestro da Montauto*,
in Rome.]

MAGNIFICI MESSER SALVESTRO ET COMPAGNIA DI ROMA PER L'ADRIETO,—As ye already know, I am

(*) Lionardo's brother-in-law, as already noted.

now engaged in the service of Our Lord Pope Paul, and busy painting in his new chapel, which prevents me finishing the tomb of Julius in San Pietro in Vincula. In this matter His Holiness Our Lord aforesaid intervened and a contract was drawn up with the *magnifico* Hieronimo Tiranno, orator of the Most Illustrious Lord Duke of Urbino. This agreement was subsequently ratified by His Excellency. At the same time I deposited a sum of money with you which was to be spent on this work. Of this sum Raffaelle da Monte Lupo was to receive 445 crowns at 10 *julii* the crown, being the remainder of the sum of 550 crowns of similar value which were due to him. This payment was to be made in respect of five statues begun and blocked out by me and given him by the Ambassador of the Duke of Urbino aforesaid to finish: that is to say, Our Lady with the Child in her arms, a Sybil, a Prophet, an Active Life, and a Contemplative Life, as appeared in full in the contract drawn up by Messer Bartolomeo Cappello, notary to the Camera, under date of August 21st, 1542. Of these five statues I finished two with my own hands, the Contemplative and Active Life, for at my earnest entreaty, and to satisfy me, Our Lord the Pope set me free from his service for a short space so that I might finish them. I did this work for the same price as would have been paid to Raffaello and I received the same money. Raffaello afterwards wrought the other three statues and set them up, as may be seen in the tomb itself. Please pay him, therefore, the sum of 170 crowns, at 10 *julii* the crown, out of the sum still remaining in your charge whenever he shall apply to

you for it: obtain his final receipt, drawn up by a notary, acknowledging that he has been paid in full for his work and is satisfied. Set this sum against the amount ye still have in hand. And fare ye well.

From Rome, on the 3rd day of February, 1545, *a Nativitate.*

Your Michelagniolo Buonarroti,
in Rome.

Originally only three statues had been entrusted to Raffaello, under a contract dated February 27th, 1542, for which he was to be paid 400 crowns. The contract also says that Michelangelo had given him other statues to finish, "among them a Contemplative Life and an Active Life, at the price of 150 crowns. The former contract notwithstanding, I, Raffaello da Monte Lupo hereby declare that the said Messer Michelangelo shall finish these two statues himself; that is to say, the Active and Contemplative Life: and as he will do this work instead of me I shall not be entitled to receive the said sum of 150 crowns, but they shall remain the property of the said Michelangelo, as is but just."

By another contract, dated May 16th, 1542, Michelangelo placed the construction of the tomb—the whole of it with the exception of the statues—in the hands of Giovanni de' Marchesi and Francesco degli Amadori of Urbino, the same Urbino who was for so many years his faithful servant and friend. There is a further contract between the same parties, dated June 1st, 1542, while two months later, on August 21st, the contract referred to in the letter given above

Photo Anderson

PART OF THE TOMB DESIGNED BY MICHELANGELO FOR JULIUS II
IN S. PIETRO IN VINCOLI, ROME

was made, entrusting the five statues to Raffaello and the remainder of the work to Francesco da Urbino.

From Rome, May 9th, 1545.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I do not think that money can be put out at interest, unless it be by usury, without running the risk of loss as well as gain. When I wrote to you concerning what ye said about using the money I sent for another purpose which seemed safer than the one I proposed, I imagined that your idea was to buy something with it—that land of Nicolò della Buca, or some such investment. I did not know ye wished to put it into a bank, for all such things are very uncertain.

I also wrote to say that I had another similar sum ready and that ye were to send me a joint letter saying whether I was to pay it out or not, seeing that so far ye had not been able to find a suitable investment. Let me have your answer, and I will proceed in accordance with your wishes.

Thou writest of the position which has been offered to thee: I tell thee thou art young yet and hast seen little of the world and its ways. I would remind thee that to be getting on in Florence is worse than to be going backwards.

Tell Giovan Simone there is a new commentary on Dante just out, written by a Lucchese, (*) but that it

(*) Alessandro Vellutello. His *Comento alla Divina Commedia* was published in Venice in 1544, by Marcolini.

does not meet with much approval from people who understand the subject and is not worth much. There is no other news that I know of.

Salute Michele Guicciardini in my name: tell him I am well, but beset with so many and so great anxieties that I have no time to eat, so ask him to excuse my not having written. Thou canst read this letter to him; it will be the same thing. As to Francesca, ask her to pray to God for me.

Once more I tell thee that whatever may be written to thee as coming from me, believe it not unless I write thee a few lines myself.

From Rome, . . ., 1545.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

Lionardo,—I wrote to thee last Saturday to say that I would rather have a couple of flasks of Trebbiano that the eight shirts thou sentest me. Now I have to tell thee that I have received a whole load of the Trebbiano, that is to say, forty-four flasks. Of these I have sent six to the Pope and some to other friends—so many that I have given nearly all of it away, as I cannot drink it myself. Although I wrote as I did, there is really no occasion for thee to send me either one thing or the other. It is enough for me if thou art a man of integrity, and an honour to the rest of us.

Michelagniolo,
in Rome.

From Rome, . . ., 1545.

To Vittoria Colonna, Marchesana di Pescara,
in Rome.

Lady,—Before receiving those things which *Vostra Signoria* wished to give me, and so that I might receive them as little unworthily as possible, I desired first to send you some work of my own hand. Then I discovered that God's permission to do this was not to be bought, and that meanwhile I was committing a great sin in keeping Your Ladyship waiting. I confess my fault, and willingly accept what you offer me. When I have them I shall consider myself to be in Paradise, not because they are in my house but because I am in theirs. (*) Therefore I am more obliged—if I could possibly be more obliged—to *Vostra Signoria* than ever.

The bearer of this will be Urbino, my assistant, to whom *Vostra Signoria* can say when it will be convenient for me to come and examine the bust you have promised to show me. I commend myself to your Ladyship.

Michelagniolo Buonarroti.

From Rome, . . ., 1545.

To Vittoria Colonna,
in Rome.

Signora Marchesa,—Seeing that I am here in Rome it does not seem to be necessary that you should delegate the matter of the Crucifix to Messer Tommao or use him as an intermediary between

(*) "Non per averle in casa, ma per essere io in casa loro."

Vostra Signoria and myself, your servant, in order to obtain my services, especially as I wish to perform more for you than for any man I ever knew in the world. But the absorbing occupations that have claimed my attention in the past and still engage me have prevented my proving this to *Vostra Signoria*. I know you are aware that love submits to no master and that he who loves does not sleep, so it seems to me that there is all the less occasion for an intermediary; and although it may seem that I do not remember, I was doing something I did not speak of in order to effect something you did not look for. My design has come to nought: "He sins who faith like this so soon forgets."

Your Ladyship's servant,
MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, January 9th, 1546.

To my very dear as a son Lionardo Buonarroti,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I have this day, January 9th, 1545, handed the sum of six hundred gold crowns in gold to Messer Luigi del Riccio here in Rome, and he will have them paid in Florence to complete the sum of a thousand crowns I promised thee. Go, therefore, to Piero di Gino Capponi, and the money will be paid to thee. Give him a receipt for so many crowns paid here, as I have already explained.

The said Messer Luigi will write below all that I wish to do for you, for I do not feel well and am able

to write no more. (*) However, I am now cured and shall have no more return of the malady, thank God. I pray that this may be so, and do thou the same.

In addition to the money above mentioned, I intend to make a provision for Giovan Simone, Gismondo and thyself of three thousand gold crowns in gold, in Florence—that is to say, a thousand crowns for each of you but all in one sum—on condition that it shall be invested in landed property or in something which may be of service to you and will remain in the family. Give your attention to this and try to find some property that would be a sound investment: when ye have found what ye consider to be suitable, let me know, and I will provide the money. This letter is sent in common to all three of you. As I have nothing further to add I close by commending myself to you. God be with you, etc.

In Rome, on the aforesaid day.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

The signature is in Michelangelo's own hand. Directly afterwards Lionardo went to see his uncle in Rome, as may be seen from the *Ricordi*, the visit lasting from January 15th to January 26th, 1546.

(*) Michelangelo had been ill, and the letter from this point is continued by Luigi del Riccio. He was nursed in the Palace of the Strozzi, and it was chiefly due to Riccio's care that he recovered, although the news of his death had already been sent to Florence.

From Rome, February 6th, 1546.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—Thou hast been very hasty in giving me particulars of the Corboli property: I did not even know thou hadst reached Florence. Art thou afraid I might repent, as perhaps thou hast been told I should? I tell thee I intend to go slowly, for thou who wast born with shoes to thy feet and a coat to thy back couldst never realise how much labour the money I have earned has cost me.

And as to thy having come to Rome in such hot haste, I do not know if thou wouldst have been so prompt if I had been in want and misery. It is enough for thee to throw away money thou hast not earned. How anxious thou art not to lose thine inheritance! And then to say it was thy duty to come for the love thou bearest to me—thy love is the love of the wood-consuming maggot! If thou hadst loved me in very truth thou wouldst have written to me after this manner: "Michelagniolo, spend the three thousand crowns on yourself in Rome, for you have given us so much that we already have sufficient for our needs. We have more care for your person than for your property."

Ye have been living on me for the past forty years, and I have never received from you even so much as a good word.

It is true that last year thou wert so rebuked and scolded that for very shame thou wast constrained to send me a load of Trebbiano; I wish now thou hadst not sent even that!

I do not write this because I have no desire to buy. I intend to do so for myself so as to secure an income, for I cannot do any more work. But I wish to go slowly, so that I may not buy fresh anxieties. Therefore, be not in a hurry.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

[P.S.]—If anybody tells thee anything, or asks thee for anything in my name, give no heed to it unless thou hearest the same from me in writing. As to that thousand ducats—or rather, crowns—I sent thee; if thou wouldst pause to think what losses may be incurred in a shop through the fault of dishonest assistants or through any other misfortune, thou wouldst prefer to invest in a piece of property as being more stable. However, take counsel among yourselves and do what seemeth best.

From Rome, April 26th, 1546.

To the Most Christian King of France.

SACRED MAJESTY,—I do not know which is the greater, the act of grace, or the wonder of it, that Your Majesty should deign to write to such as I am, and furthermore to ask for things within my gift in no way worthy the name of Your Majesty. But such as they are, Your Majesty may understand that for a long time I have been desirous of serving Your Highness, but as no suitable opportunity has presented itself since Your Majesty has not been in Italy to see my work, I have been unable to do anything. I am now an old man, and the next few months will be taken up with work for Pope Paul; but, if

after it is done there yet remains a little more to my span of life, I will, as I have already said, strive to carry out what I have desired to do for Your Majesty for some time; that is to say, some work in marble, one in bronze, and one in painting. And if death should prevent the fulfilment of this desire, should it be possible to carve statues in the next life, I will carry out my promise there, where there is an end of growing old. And I pray that God will grant Your Majesty a long and happy life.

From Rome, the XXVIth day of April, MDXLVI.

Your most Christian Majesty's
Most humble servant,
MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI.

From Rome, April 29th, [1546].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I do not care over much about that house in the Via de' Martelli because I do not think it is the sort of street we ought to live in. The one belonging to the *Arte della Lana*, in Via de' Servi ye might buy, if it has sufficient rooms and is otherwise suitable, but first see that it is not encumbered in any way. Let me know how much money is still required and I will have it sent you without delay. But have a care that ye be not cheated into buying, for the news that ye are on the lookout for a house may result in fictitious compulsory sales. It seems to me ye ought to see it first, that is to say, examine the premises thoroughly, and then find out the price. If ye find this is exorbitant then leave the

house for anyone who may want it: money is not to be picked up in the street. However, I will send you the requisite money, as I have already said, leaving you entirely free to buy the house or to leave it alone as ye think best. I have nothing more to add. Let me know what ye do in the matter.

On the 29th day of April.

[P.S.]—About the purchase of the house, I do not mean that ye are to haggle over a matter of ten crowns or so, but only if they ask an unreasonable price.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, [June 5th, 1546].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I have had the note of the power of attorney copied out just as it reached me. I have authorised thee to act as my representative, and I send thee herewith the authorisation. Have it examined for thyself, and if it is sufficient for thy purpose, it is sufficient for mine—I have other things to think of besides powers of attorney. Do not write to me again: every time one of thy letters arrives I get an attack of the fever because of the trouble I have to read it! I cannot think where thou has learnt to write. I believe that if thou hadst to write to the greatest donkey in the world thou wouldst write with more care than thou dost to me. Therefore, do not add another to the troubles I have already, for I have

enough to content me. Ye will have the power of attorney, so that ye can have it seen into and examined for yourselves; if ye neglect this the loss will be your own.

MICHELANGELO,
in Rome.

From Rome, [September 4th, 1546].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—Thou hast written me a whole treatise about a small matter, and that only annoys me. As to the money, as to the money (*de' danari, de' danari*) thou writest about, consult among yourselves and spend it on what ye most need. I have nothing more to add and no time for writing.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

From Rome, [December 4th, 1546].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I have received sixteen marzolino cheeses and paid four *julii* to the muleteer. Thou shouldst have received the letter I wrote about buying a suitable house, and now as I write thy letter acknowledging its arrival has just been brought to me, in which thou sayest thou wilt go and see Michele and Francesca and give them my message. Salute them in my name. As to buying the house, I repeat what I said before, that is to say, try to get one of

honourable condition if thou art able for about 1,500 or 2,000 crowns situated in our own *Quartiere* [*di Santa Croce*]. As soon as ye have found out what ye seek I will have the money paid over in Florence. I say this because an honourable (*onorevole*) house standing within the city will be a great credit to us, and would make a far better impression than a few acres of farm land would do, for after all we are citizens, and descended from very noble ancestors. I have always done my best to resuscitate the family, but I had never any brothers willing to assist me. Therefore do all thou canst to carry out my instructions, and strive to bring Gismondo back to the life of a Florentine citizen, so that it may not be said, as people say here now, to my great shame, that I have a brother at Settignano who trudges after oxen. When ye have bought the house we shall be able to buy other things.

Some day, when I have the time, I will tell you the history of our origin, whence we are descended and when it was we came to Florence, which perhaps ye do not know. We must not let what God has given us slip from our grasp.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From this letter it is clear that Michelangelo believed himself to be descended from the Counts of Canossa. See also his letter to his nephew of January 6th, 1548, p. 228. The new house was required because the project of Lionardo's marriage was already on foot.

From Rome, [December . . ., 1546].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—About a year ago there came into my possession a manuscript Florentine Chronicle, in which I find that about two hundred years ago, if I remember rightly, a certain Buonarroti Simoni was several times one of the Signoria: after him there was a Simone Buonarroti, then a Michele di Buonarroto Simoni, and later on a Francesco Buonarroti. I found no mention in it of Lionardo, who was also one of the Signoria, and the father of our father Lodovico, because the book was not continued down to his day. Therefore it seems to me that thou shouldst sign thyself as "Lionardo di Buonarroto Buonarroti Simoni." There is no occasion for me to reply to the rest of thy letter because I have not yet been able to make out what it is thou hast written, nor about the house.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

From Rome, March . . ., 1547.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I have received the acknowledgement for the money paid to you by the Capponi in exchange for the sum I handed to the Altoviti here. I am very much surprised that Gismondo did not go with thee to draw this money or the last sum I sent, as what I send to Florence is intended no less for them than for thee. Thou writest thanking me for

all I am doing for thee: thou shouldst have said, *We thank you for all you are doing for us.* I send thee this money under the same conditions as that for the shop; that is to say, thou art to do nothing with it unless my brothers give their consent. I have already written to thee about the purchase of a house, for when the time comes for thee to marry, which seems to me a necessary thing, the house ye live in will not be large enough. If there is no suitable house to be found offered for sale I think ye might enlarge the house ye now occupy in the Via Ghibellina; that is to say, ye could build over the terrace as far as the corner and continue it down the street at the side, buying up the little house below it, if that would be sufficient. However, if ye can find a suitable house to buy, one that is free from all charges, I think it would be the best course. I will send you the necessary money. With reference to thy marrying, several names have been suggested to me: some were suitable, others not. I expect that ye have also been consulted in the matter. If thy mind be inclined to it, let me know: and let me know also if thou hast already a preference. I will tell thee my opinion in the matter. I have nothing more to add.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, . . . [1547].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—With regard to that house of the Corsi, thou writest to say that we had best be in

no hurry about buying as it is not yet finished, and that it seems to thee advisable to proceed instead with the matter of the shop, as thou hast found someone to go into partnership with thee. To me it seems—provided the external walls are being soundly built and there are no mortgages on the property—that we ought to buy it, so as to dispose of that money. The internal fittings of the house could be carried out piece by piece afterwards. After the house has been bought there may still remain enough money to enable thee to set up the shop with a partner, although this does not seem to me the proper time for such a speculative undertaking. I do not know of any family in Florence that has prospered by other means than the possession of landed property. However, do as seemeth to thee best: whatever ye may do concerns yourselves alone. As to the almsgiving, methinks thou art over neglectful: if thou wouldst not give away my money for the repose of thy father's soul, how much less wouldst thou give of thine own? Salute Messer Francesco [Fattucci] for me: thank him and say, with reference to thy marrying, that I am waiting for a friend of mine, now absent from Rome, who has three or four propositions to put before me. I will let him know the result, and we shall see if anything suitable offers.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, . . . [1547].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I have written to thee concerning thy taking a wife, and I told thee of three girls whose names had been mentioned to me here. One is a daughter of Alamanno de' Medici, another the daughter of Domenico Gugni and the third a daughter of Cherubin Fortini. None of them are known to me, and therefore I can tell thee neither good nor bad of them, nor can I advise thee to take one rather than another. If, however, Michele Guicciardini is willing to trouble himself over the matter he would be able to find out what sort of people they are and inform us. He could do the same if I hear of any more. Therefore beg him to do this for my sake, and salute him in my name. As to buying a house, it appears to me that this will be necessary before thou canst marry, because your present house is not large enough. So if thou writest to me about this matter see that thy letter be written so that I can read it: that is, if thou desirest me to answer and tell thee my views. Messer Giovan Francesco also might be able to advise thee well in these matters, for he is a man of years and experience. Commend me to him. But above all seek counsel from God, for this is a serious step in life. I would remind thee that there should be always at least ten years difference between the age of husband and wife; and have a care that she be healthy as well as good. I have no more to say.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

From Rome, [July. 1547].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—From thy last letter touching the purchase of the house I learn that Giovanni Corsi is dead and that thou art uncertain what his heirs will do about it. Thou writest also to say thou thinkest the house of Zanobi Buondelmonte is for sale. This would suit me twice as well as the Corsi house: but whichever of the two it may be, I think we ought not to hesitate over a matter of a hundred crowns, provided that due care is exercised in securing an investment free from all drawbacks. And this I think ought to be done with as little delay as possible; for as thou must take a wife, or desirest to take a wife, it would be better in every way for thee to marry before I die than to wait until I am in my grave. In order to send thee the remainder of the sum which I think may be lacking for the purchase of either of the houses I will begin, perhaps during the coming week, to send thee a few crowns: and as in thy letter thou hast mentioned a case deserving of charity, of the money I shall send thee thou art to give the woman whatever thou thinkest reasonable. I have no more to say. Salute Guicciardino and Francesca in my name. Commend me also to Messer Giovan Francesco, and ask him to forgive me for not having done as I ought. I have too much else to think of.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

[P.S.]—I would like thee to obtain from Messer Giovan Francesco the height of the cupola at Santa

Maria del Fiore, from the ground to the level of the lantern; also the height including the lantern; and to send these measurements to me. On thy letter draw out full-size a third part of a Florentine *braccio*.

The post-script is of interest as showing that Michelangelo was preparing his plans for the dome of St. Peter's.

From Rome, [August . . ., 1547].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

Lionardo,—Thy letter has arrived with the receipt for the 550 gold crowns in gold I paid over here to Bettino. Thou sayest thou wilt give four to that woman for the love of God: I am well pleased. Of the remainder I wish thee to give away enough to make it up to 50 crowns, for the love of God, partly for the soul of Buonarroto, thy father, and partly for my own soul. Make enquiries and try to find out some needy Florentine with daughters to be married or placed in a nunnery, and give him the money: but do it secretly and take care not to be deceived. Get a receipt from him and send it to me. I say secretly because I am speaking of burgesses, and I know that the needy ones are ashamed to go about and beg. As to thy choice of a wife, I repeat that I cannot recommend one more than another, for it is so long since I was in Florence that I know nothing about the position of my fellow-citizens. Ye must decide in this matter among yourselves; but when ye have

found someone to your liking I should be glad to hear all about it.

Thou hast sent me the measure of a *braccio* in brass as though I were a mason or a carpenter and wanted to carry it about with me. I was ashamed to have the thing in the house, and have thrown it away.

Francesca writes to say she is not very well and that as she has four children she is very much worried about her own state of health. She knows well enough that I am in ill-health: as to the other matters, I do not think she can want for anything. As to worries, I believe I have many more than she has, and in addition I have to fight against old age, so that I have no time for looking after my relations. However, exhort her in my name to have patience, and salute Guicciardino for me.

I advise thee to lay out the money I sent on some good investment, land or something of the sort, for it is very dangerous to keep money lying about, especially in these days. When ye sleep, keep both eyes open.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, [December 17th, 1547].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I learn from thy letter that a lawsuit is pending with reference to certain lands at Settignano and that thou desirest me to send a power of attorney so that ye may defend the action. The power of attorney will be sent with this letter, and I

think I ought at the same time to send you a book of contracts which I caused to be copied out in proper form by Ser Giovanni da Romena, and for which I had to pay 18 ducats. The contract for the said land cannot fail to be among them : and when I send the book I will at the same time send a number of contracts and ratifications and other papers which are worth all I possess in the world. I would like thee, therefore, to seek out some trustworthy carrier and tell him to come and see me when he is in Rome, when I will give him the bundle containing the said documents. It will weigh about 20 pounds (*libbre*). Thou art to settle the price with him, and do not quarrel over an odd half-crown if he deliver the parcel to thee safely. Tell him, moreover, that when he brings me thy letter acknowledging its arrival I will also give him something for his trouble. About the shop ; Guicciardino writes to me saying thou hast begged of him to go into partnership with him, and thou sayest that he has begged it of thee. It does not matter either way so long as ye arrive at a clear understanding, for we have none too many friends or relations that we can afford to quarrel among ourselves. As to our family name, I should certainly add " Simone " to it, and if it be thought over-long by those who do not care to read it all through they can leave it alone.

The letter is unsigned. The reference to *Simone* concerns the surname of the family. His real ancestry, as these letters show, was a continual source of interest to Michelangelo when there was a prospect

of the name being carried on by possible descendants of Lionardo. Lionardo and his uncles were being sued by the *Monte* with reference to a piece of land which Michelangelo had bought from Pietro Tedaldi at Settignano.

From Rome, [January 6th, 1548].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—A man bearing a letter from thee has been here to see me saying he is the son of Lorenzo del Cione, the carrier, and asking for the bundle of contracts I said I would send thee. I do not know the man, but believing him to be the person sent by thee I shall give them into his charge, though I do it with some misgiving as it is a matter of very great importance. When the bundle is delivered to thee thou must send me a letter by the same man and I will give him something, as I have already written. I have put the papers into a box and covered it with a double wrapper of waxed cloth ; it is tied up in such a manner that the rain cannot do it any harm. I have no more to say. I do not know the date, but to-day is the Epiphany.

In the book containing the contracts there is a letter from the Conte Alessandro da Canossa which I found in the house here to-day. He has already been to see me in Rome and treated me as a kinsman. Take care of the letter.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

This letter from the Conte da Canossa formed the basis of Michelangelo's claim to be descended from

the nobility, as it mentions a certain Simoni da Canossa who was Podestà of Florence in 1250, and from whom the Buonarroti Simoni were supposed to be descended. It has been proved that there is no truth in the assumption.

From Rome, [January 16th, 1548].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

Lionardo,—I learn from thy last letter of Giovan Simoni's death. No greater grief could have befallen me, for although I am old I still hoped that I should see him before he died and before I died. God has willed it otherwise. Patience! I should like to hear more of how he died, and if he died shriven and having received the Sacrament, observing all the ordinances of the Church: for if I know that he received them I shall grieve the less.

As to the documents and the book of contracts which I told thee to have fetched by the muleteer, I gave them to the man who brought me thy letter—it was on the day of the Epiphany, if I remember rightly, for I think it must have been ten days ago. I gave them to him packed in a large box wrapped in waxed cloth, tied up, and firmly secured: see that thou receivest it and advise me of its arrival, as the papers are very important. I cannot add anything more to this letter because I received thine late and have no time to write. Remember me to Guicciardino and to Francesca, and to Messer Giovanfrancesco.

Michelagniolo Buonarroti,
in Rome.

Giovan Simone Buonarroti died on January 9th, 1548.

From Rome, [January . . ., 1548].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

Lionardo,—Thy letter has arrived acknowledging the receipt of the box with the book of contracts, and saying that its arrival was opportune: I thought it would be wanted. As to the Corsi house, I think it would be well to delay the matter as long as possible so that we may not be deceived. As to the deed of partnership, there is no need to send me a copy as I should not understand it. If thou doest well the benefit will be thine own.

With regard to Giovansimone's death, of which thou writest, thou treatest the matter very lightly, for thou hast not given me particulars of anything, nor dost thou say what he has left. I would remind thee that he was my brother, and as that is the case it is natural that I should grieve and wish to do something for the repose of his soul as I did for the soul of thy father. Have a care that thou be not ungrateful for all that has been done for thee, for thou hadst nothing in the world of thine own to begin with. I marvel that Gismondo has not written a single word to me about it, for it concerned him quite as much as it did me: thee it concerns only so much as we allow it to, and no more.

Michelagniolo,
in Rome.

From Rome, February . . ., 1548.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

Lionardo,—Since I last wrote to thee I have come across a letter waiting for me in the house here, in which thou givest me an account of all the property that was found belonging to Giovansimone. After that I received another letter in which thou givest me particulars of how he died. As to what he has left, thou mightest have been the first to give me information instead of leaving me to hear of it from others before thee, as was the case. I was excessively indignant about it. As to how he died, thou sayest that although he was not fortified with all the due sacraments of the Church he died, nevertheless, full of penitence. If this is the case it will suffice for the welfare of his soul. Touching the matter of his property, Gismondo is his natural heir as he has made no will: and at the same time I would have thee do as much good as thou canst for the welfare of his soul. Do not stint in the matter of money, for I will not fail thee in whatever thou mayest do. With regard to the contracts and other writings I sent thee, look carefully through them, for they may be of still further use to thee. As to the Corsi house, it seems to me that thou hadst best abide by the offer already made, for if they really desire to sell and matters are as thou sayest, I do not think they will be likely to get more for it in these days. I have nothing more to say.

Michelagniolo Buonarroti,
in Rome.

From Rome, [March . . ., 1548].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

Lionardo,—I am glad that thou hast told me about this decree of banishment, for although I have in the past avoided all conversation or dealings with [Florentine] exiles, I shall be still more careful for the future. As to that time when I was ill in the house of Strozzi, I do not consider that I was then actually in their house, for I was in Messer Luigi del Riccio's room, who was my very great friend. Since Bartolomeo Angelini died I have not found anyone who was able to look after my affairs better than he did, nor have I found any more faithful. I have had nothing to do with the house since he died, and all Rome can bear witness to this as well as to the life I live: for I keep to myself, I go about little, and I speak to nobody—least of all to Florentines. If a man salute me in the street I cannot do otherwise than answer him with fair words: then I pass on. If I could know which of them were exiles I would pass by with no reply whatever. As I have already said, I shall henceforth keep a strict watch over myself, especially as I have so many other things to think of that it is a burden merely to maintain life itself.

As to setting up shop, do as ye yourselves think good, for it is not my trade and I cannot advise you to any good purpose. I have only this warning to give you, that if ye waste the money already in your hands ye will never have it made good to you.

Michelagniolo,
in Rome.

The law of exile was that known as the "Polverina," having been formulated by Iacopo Polverini, of Prato, by order of Cosimo de' Medici, Duke of Florence. Michelangelo, it will be remembered, had been seriously ill in Rome in 1544 (p. 204), and had been nursed by Luigi del Riccio in the Strozzi Palace.

From Rome, April 7th, 1548.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I have not replied earlier to thy last letter because I could not. As to thou taking a wife, thou sayest it seems advisable to wait until the summer is over: if it appear so to thee it appears so to me. As to thy going to Loreto, as to thy going to Loreto (*) on thy father's behalf, thou must go at all hazards if it be in fulfilment of a vow; if it be only for the repose of his soul I would much rather that thou shouldest give away the money that would be consumed by thy journey in alms for the love of God than do aught else with it; for if thou takest money to the priests, God knows what they may do with it. Moreover it does not seem to be wise that thou shouldest waste the time just when thou art about to open a shop. And if thou wishest to prosper in thy business thou must be prepared to labour unceasingly and to put on one side all the pleasant thoughts of youth. I have nothing else to add. As to the Corsi house, I should be glad to know if anything more

(*) Thus repeated in the original.

has ever been said to thee about it. Commend me to the priest, to Guicciardino and to Francesca.

On the 7th day of April, 1548.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

It appears that Lionardo opened his shop shortly afterwards, as on April 14th Michelangelo acknowledges the receipt of a copy of the deed relating to the Arte della Lana.

From Rome, [May 2nd, 1548].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO, — I have received the small barrel [*caratello*] of pears ; there were 86 in all. I sent 33 of them to the Pope, who thought them very excellent and was greatly pleased with the present. But as to the small barrel of cheese, the officer of the customs [dogana] tells me that the carrier is a rogue and that the cheese never got as far as his office. If I can find out whether he is in Rome I will see that he gets his deserts ; not on account of the cheese but so as to teach him not to value his fellow men so cheaply. I have been very ill these last few days with dysuria, and for that reason I am still far from well : however, I am now better than I was. I tell thee this lest some gossipping person should write thee a whole tissue of lies and give thee a fright. Tell the priest not to address me any more as *Michelagnolo scultore*, for I am not known here by any other name than that of Michelagniolo Buonarroti ; tell him also that if there is a Florentine who wishes to have an altar-picture

painted he had better go and find a painter to do the work. I was never either a painter or a sculptor like a shop-keeper. I have ever been careful for the honour of my father and of my brothers, although I have served three Popes, having been obliged to do so. There is nothing more to add. Thou wilt have learnt what I think about the damsel from my letter written on the last day of last month. Do not tell the priest anything of what I have said about him in this letter: I shall pretend not to have received his.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, May 12th, 1548.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I have written to thee several times with reference to the house and lands at Santa Caterina and every other matter, telling you that ye are to act as ye think best, I mean with regard to buying; and also that ye are to satisfy yourselves upon every point that may arise so that there may be no law-suits to follow. I must remind you that when I bought the land at Santa Caterina I bought it free of mortgages and have kept it free ever since. Ye are not to burden it with a charge of so-much-per-annum as in the case of the land ye now wish to purchase. Be careful that ye keep the one property distinct from the other. I have nothing to add more. Thank Messer Giovan Francesco for the great kindness he has done me, although it was not a matter of much importance. Thou art to take the greatest care of all

the papers I sent thee in that box, even down to the least of them, for they are very important.

On the 12th day of May, 1548.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, [June . . ., 1548].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I have received a load of Trebbiano, which was exceedingly welcome: nevertheless I repeat that thou art not again to send me anything unless I write, and then I will send the money to pay for what I require. As to the shop I shall be pleased if thou wilt let me know how the matter goes. I have nothing more to add. Commend me to Guicciardino and to Francesca, also to Messer Giovan Francesco.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

From Rome, August 10th, 1548.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—Thou hast written to me saying ye have a farm under consideration valued at 1,300 florins, outside the Porta al Prato. If it be a good thing I think ye ought to secure it at all costs, provided there be no doubts as to the ownership and we be not involved in law-suits to follow. Have a care that it be not situated where the floods of the Arno can damage it. If thou shouldst hear of any large property for sale, about ten or fifteen miles from

Florence,—I mean something costing about three or four thousand crowns—I should like to buy it so that I could secure the revenue myself: for as I have lost the Porto I am now in the position of having to find a source of income that cannot be taken from me, and I would much rather that it were near Florence than anywhere else. I have written to thee of this matter so that when thou hearest of some good thing that is going for about the price I have mentioned thou mayest send me news of it quietly. There is nothing to add. Salute everybody in the house in my name, and commend me to Messer Giovan Francesco.

On the tenth day of August, 1548.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

The reference to the "Porto" is the "Passo del Po" at Piacenza, which has already been mentioned. It was given to Michelangelo by Pope Paul III. as part payment of the annuity of 1,200 crowns conferred upon him by Clement VII., but it seems to have brought its owner more lawsuits than money. Finally, when Piacenza fell into the hands of the Emperor Charles V. Michelangelo was deprived of this source of income altogether. As Michelangelo explains, it was to save himself from starving that he wished to invest his money in such a way as to provide an independent income, though he subsequently received another post from the Pope which yielded him twenty crowns a month. It is mentioned in the *Ricordi* as "mio ufficio di Romagna," the entry being dated February 13th, 1549.

From Rome, [August . . ., 1548].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—As I was quite unable to decipher thy last letter I put it into the fire: therefore I cannot reply to thee in any way. I have already told thee many times that whenever I receive a letter from thee I am thrown into a fever before I can find out how to read it. Therefore I tell thee that from henceforth thou art to write to me no more; and if there is anything to tell me thou must find someone who knows how to write, for I have other matters to attend to besides racking my brains over thy letters. Messer Giovan Francesco sends me word that thou desirest to come to Rome for a few days. I am indeed surprised to learn that, having just gone into partnership as thou hast thyself written to tell me, thou art yet able to leave thy business. However, have a care how thou throwest away the money I have sent thee. And Gismondo also had best be careful, for people who have not had to earn their money have little knowledge of its value, as experience nas shown, for the greater number of those who are born to wealth throw their money away and die ruined men. Wherefore let thine eyes be open; think of, and try to realise, the miseries and worries which beset my daily path, old as I am. This day there came to me a Florentine citizen who spoke of a maid belonging to the Ginori family, saying that thou hadst already been consulted about it in Florence and that she found favour in thine eyes. I do not know if the news be true, nor do I know how to advise thee as I have

no information on the subject. I do not wish thee to choose for thy wife a damsel whose father, if he were in a position to give her a suitable dowry, would never have given her to thee. I desire that the man who gives his daughter to be thy wife shall give her to thee for thy personal qualities and not because of thy possessions. It seems to me that it ought to be for thee to decide whether thou desirest a large dowry with thy wife or not, and not for others to offer a girl to thee because she has no money. However, thou must seek only for soundness of body and mind, and for nobility of descent, having an eye to her character and to her relations: for these are matters of the greatest importance.

I have nothing to add. Commend me to Messer Giovan Francesco.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, January 18th, 1549.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—The house mentioned in thy letter is, I think thou saidst, the one belonging to the da Gagliano who, as thou sayest, used to live in the Via del Cocomero, on the right-hand side going towards San Marco, near the corner of the Piazza di San Niccolò. If this is the one I know nothing about it. However, go and see it; if the situation satisfies thee and the house is convenient, take it, but before all things make sure that the title is valid and satisfy thyself that the house is suited to our rank. As to thy marriage, I

hear that the two damsels mentioned in my letter are already married. Thou must comfort thyself with the thought that neither was intended for thee: and thou must leave thy future in God's hands and have faith that He will provide the proper wife for thee. I am an old man, as ye know, and as every hour may be my last and I have yet a little capital—although it is nothing much—I do not wish to lose it, for I got it only as the result of hard work. I have been considering, therefore, whether the money would not be safe in Santa Maria Nuova at Florence until I could decide what to do with it, and so that I could make use of it in case of illness or any other necessity. If it were there it could not be taken from me. Discuss the matter with Gismondo and let me have your opinion.

Since writing the above I have had a talk with a friend of mine about that da Gagliano house, which he praised very highly. If it be the same as that mentioned in thy letter I should advise thee to secure it at all costs and not to bother over a matter of a hundred crowns, provided that the title to the property is free from all charges. Let me know how much money will be required and to whom I am to pay it here in order that it may reach you. I have nothing to add.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

On the 18th day of January, 1549.

[P.S.]—Tell Messer Giovan Francesco that for the last month I have been able to get about but little as I have not been feeling very well, but that I will

go to Bettino, who is more used to the Court than I am: the two of us together will do the best we can. I have very, very few friends in Rome and I know none of the people who might be of service: if I were to ask one of them to do me a favour every single one would demand a thousand of me in return. Therefore I find it convenient to have dealings with as few persons as possible. However, I will do what I can. Commend me to him.

From Rome, February 1st, 1549.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—In my last letter I sent thee a list of girls of marriageable age which had been sent me from Florence by some one who I suppose must be a middle-man (*sensale*), for he could not have been a person of much intelligence, or else, seeing that I have been living for sixteen, or rather seventeen, years in Rome, he would have realised how little I can know about the various families in Florence.

However, I repeat that if thou desirest to take a wife thou must not look to me, for I am not the person to advise thee: but I tell thee again that thou art not to seek for a dowry, but only for high qualities and a good reputation.

I think there must be many noble but poor families in Florence, with whom it would be an act of charity to contract a marriage even though there were no dowry forthcoming, for then they could not afford to be over proud. Thou requirest someone who will remain with thee, a woman who will be in subjection to thee and

who will not desire to put on airs or go off every day to parties and weddings; for where there are constant festivities it is easy for a woman to become a wanton (*puttana*), especially if she have no relatives. Nor shouldst thou heed even though any should say thou seekest to ennoble thyself by thy choice, for it is well known that we have been Florentine citizens since the olden times and are of as noble descent as any other family. Therefore commend thy cause to God and pray that He will provide the proper wife for thee. I should be very glad if, when thou hast found some one to thy liking, thou wouldst let me know all about her before completing the alliance.

As to he house of which thou hast written, I have already replied that I received a favourable report about it, and that thou wert not to hesitate for a matter of a hundred crowns or so.

Then also thou hast mentioned a farm at Monte Spertoli: I replied that I no longer desired to purchase it, not on account of the farm itself, but for other reasons. I now say that if thou findest some eligible property with a revenue that I could secure for myself thou art to let me know, for I am prepared to buy it if the investment be a satisfactory one: and as to the house, when thou hast settled the price let me know how much money I am to send. What thou hast to do must be done quickly, because the time is short.

As to what I said to thee about Santa Maria Nuova, I have been advised against it, so think no more of the matter. On the first day of February, 1549.

From Rome, February 21st, 1549.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I have written to thee many times concerning thy marriage, saying thou art not to believe anybody who may tell thee he is speaking on my behalf unless he brings thee my actual letters. I repeat the same once more, because it is more than a year ago since Bartolomeo Bettini began trying to cajole me into giving thee one of his nieces to wife. I have always spoken him fair but have given no promises. He has now made another vigorous attack upon me through a friend of mine. I replied that I was certain thou hadst already found a maid to thy liking, that thou hadst practically settled the preliminaries, and that I was loath to dissuade thee from what was already done. I give thee this information so that thou mayst know how to reply, for I have reason to suppose that warm persuasion will be brought to bear on thee in Florence. Do not let thyself be caught by the bait, for though their offers are tempting thou wouldst find thyself in a position far from agreeable. Bartolomeo is a worthy fellow, and obliging enough, but he is not our equal—thy sister married a Guicciardini. I do not think I need say any more, for I know thou art aware that honour is of greater price than worldly possessions. I have no more to tell thee. Commend me to Guicciardino and to Francesca, and tell them from me to take heart of grace, because there are many others in like tribulation with themselves, especially

in these days when the better a man is the more he has to suffer.

On the 21st day of February, 1549.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, March 15th, 1549.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I need not tell thee over again what I have already said in my last letter. As to this dysuria I am suffering from, I have since been very ill on account of it, groaning in pain night and day without sleep and without respite of any kind. According to what the doctors say, they think I am suffering from calculus. As yet they are not sure, but in the meantime I am being treated for that complaint and am encouraged to be hopeful about the result. Nevertheless, old as I am and suffering from so cruel a malady, I must not be too sanguine about their effecting a cure. I have been advised to try the Baths at Viterbo, but it will be impossible to go there until the beginning of May: meanwhile I am filling in the time as best I may, and perhaps I shall be fortunate enough to find the trouble grow less, or to find a good remedy for it. I have much need of God's assistance at the moment. Tell Francesca, therefore, to intercede for me; and tell her that if she could know how ill I have been she would readily discover that she is not without companions in trouble. In all other respects I am pretty much as I was at thirty years. This illness has

crept upon me as the result of incessant discomfort and continued neglect of my health. Patience! Perhaps it will turn out better than I suppose, with God's help: and if it end otherwise I will let thee know about it. Unless I write to thee myself do not be disturbed by anything thou mayst hear from others. If I am suffering from calculus the doctors tell me the disease is in a very early stage and therefore a small matter; and for this reason, as I have already said, they are very hopeful about it.

If thou shouldst come to hear of a case of extreme poverty in some noble family—and I believe that such cases are to be found—please let me have information about it, with the name; and I will then send thee any sum up to fifty crowns so that thou canst give it to them for the good of my soul. This sum will in no way diminish what I have set aside for any of you in my will; therefore, do as I say without fail.

On the 15th day of March, 1549.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
In Rome.

From Rome, March 23rd, 1549.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—In my last letter I wrote to thee concerning my suffering from calculus, a most cruel disease as every one knows who has had it. They sent me a certain kind of water which I had to drink, and as a result, in passing water I passed at the same time a large quantity of thick white matter

together with portions of the shell of the stone. I am much better in consequence, and the doctors hope that in a short time I shall be entirely free from it; thanks be to God and to some devout person who has been praying for me. Ye shall be informed as to how I get on. I need not repeat what I told thee about the alms-giving: I know thou wilt seek out such a case with all diligence.

This illness has made me think of putting my spiritual and temporal affairs into better order than I have hitherto done. I have accordingly drawn up a rough outline of how I should like to dispose of my possessions. If I can, I will put it into writing in my next letter, and ye will be able to tell me what ye think about it. I want to be quite sure, however, that letters on this subject are sent through a trustworthy source. I have nothing more to add at present.

On the 23rd day of March, 1549.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

With regard to the alms-giving, the fifty crowns were employed to enable a daughter of Niccolò Cerretani to enter the Convent of Santa Verdiana, in Florence.

From Rome, April 5th, 1549.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—Last week I sent a sum of fifty gold crowns in gold by Urbino to Bettino, who will have the money paid to thee in Florence. I suppose thou

wilt already have received it ere this and wilt have done as I said, either on behalf of the Cerretani or someone else, wherever there is the greatest need. Let me know what thou hast done. As to putting my affairs in order as I said in my letter, all I wished to say was that it seemed advisable for me to make a will, if only because I am old and ill. The will is to be after this manner: I leave to Gismondo and to thee all I have, under the following conditions, that Gismondo my brother and thou my nephew are to have an equal interest in all I possess, and that neither shall be able to deal with any portion of it without the consent of the other. Whenever ye are ready to have this drawn up in proper form by a notary I shall be ready to ratify it.

As to my malady, I am very much better. It is now quite certain that I am suffering from urinary calculus, but it is not very advanced, and thanks to God and by virtue of the water I am drinking, it is gradually diminishing so that I have hopes of being entirely free from it. In spite of this, however, and in view of the fact that I am an old man, as well as for many other reasons, I should be glad if all my property could be transferred to Florence so that I could enjoy the use of it as long as I had occasion and that afterwards it would come to you. It amounts in all to about four thousand crowns. I am particularly anxious to do this now as, having to go to those baths [at Viterbo], I should like to have everything in as good order as possible. Talk the matter over with Gismondo: think it over and let me know what ye advise, for it is as important to you as to me.

As to thy taking a wife, this morning a friend of mine came to see me and urged me to advise thee to take one of the daughters of Lionardo Ginori: the mother was a Soderini. I give thee this advice as I have been asked to do, but beyond this I say no more, knowing nothing more of the matter. However, think it over carefully and do not bother about the money side of the question. When thou hast decided let me have thine answer so that I can reply with a yes or no to my friend.

On the 5th day of April, 1549.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

[P.S.]—I should be very greatly pleased if, before taking a wife, thou hadst already bought a more honourable and a larger house than the one ye now occupy, and I should like to have sent the money and settled the matter.

What I have written to thee concerning the Ginori girl I only wrote because I had been asked to do so: I do not mean that thou art to take her rather than another. I leave thee entirely free to do what seemeth to thee best, without regard to worldly questions, as I have already said. Therefore think carefully, and do not delay when once thy mind is made up.

From Rome, [May 2nd, 1549].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I now repeat what I told thee in a former letter, that is to say, go and see that farm at Chianti of which thou hast written, and if ye find it satisfactory ye are to buy it at all costs and not to

hesitate for a matter of fifty crowns. I give ye a free commission to do this: that is to say if it is a sound investment ye are to buy it at all costs and not to bother about the price. Let me know what ye have done because then I will send you the necessary money without delay.

About thy getting married; I mentioned a daughter of Lionardo Ginori to thee because I had been urged to do so by a friend of mine. Thou hast replied reminding me of what I said last concerning the same matter. I wrote as I did because I distrust the pomps and vanities which are so dear to those belonging to exalted families, and to avoid the possibility of thy becoming the mere tool of a woman. Nevertheless, if thou findest the proposal agreeable I would not have thee heed what I said, for I am altogether ignorant of the Florentine citizens of to-day. Therefore, if the alliance please thee pay no attention to what I have said: and if it please thee not, have no more to do with it. As to the damsel, thou art the person to be satisfied, and if thou art satisfied with her I shall be satisfied too. Answer me without hesitation, for I have no friend here I wish to oblige and I am thinking only for thy welfare. As to the cruel disease from which I was suffering, after being given up for dead I am now so much better that I feel as though I had taken a new lease of life. There is no need to add more. Let me have a reply when thou hast made up thy mind, and do not in any way consider the wishes of others unless thou art thyself perfectly content with thy decision.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, May 25th, 1549.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—From thy last letter I learn that ye have obtained possession of the farm at Chianti. I think thou saidst the price was 2,300 florins at seven *lire* the florin. If, as thou sayest, the lands are good ye did well not to be too particular about the price. I have already delivered 500 gold crowns in gold to Bartolomeo Bettini and he will have them paid over to you in Florence as a first instalment, and on Saturday next I will despatch another 500 through the Altoviti. When Urbino comes back from Urbino, whither he went a few days ago, I will send you the remainder—that will be in about ten days' time. The gold crowns in gold I sent you were worth eleven *julii* each here. As to the property at Monte Spertoli, if it is a good investment and to be sold during the minority of its owners, see that ye obtain possession of that also and do not haggle over the price. I have no more to add. Go and fetch the money, and let me know of its arrival. I will put the order for payment in this letter.

On the 25th day of May, 1549.

From Rome, . . . [1549].

To Messer Benedetto Varchi.

MESSER BENEDETTO,—So that it may be clear that I have received your little book, which duly reached me, I will make such a reply as I can to what you ask, although I am very ignorant on the subject. In my opinion painting should be considered excellent in

Photo Anderson

THE HOLY FAMILY

After the picture by Michelangelo in the Uffizi Gallery

proportion as it approaches the effect of relief, while relief should be considered bad in proportion as it approaches the effect of painting. I used to consider that sculpture was the lantern of painting and that between the two things there was the same difference as that between the sun and the moon. But now that I have read your book, in which, speaking as a philosopher, you say that things which have the same end are themselves the same, I have changed my opinion; and I now consider that painting and sculpture are one and the same thing, unless greater nobility be imparted by the necessity for a keener judgment, greater difficulties of execution, stricter limitations and harder work. And if this be the case no painter ought to think less of sculpture than of painting and no sculptor less of painting than of sculpture. By sculpture I mean the sort that is executed by cutting away from the block: the sort that is executed by building up resembles painting. This is enough, for as one and the other, that is to say both painting and sculpture proceed from the same faculty, it would be an easy matter to establish harmony between them and to let such disputes alone, for they occupy more time than the execution of the figures themselves. As to that man who wrote saying that painting was more noble than sculpture, as though he knew as much about it as he did of the other subjects on which he has written, why, my serving-maid would have written better! An infinite number of things still remain unsaid which might be urged in favour of these arts, but, as I have already said, they would take up too much time and I have very little to spare

seeing that I am old and almost fitted to be numbered among the dead. For this reason I beg of you to excuse me. I commend myself unto you and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the too great honour you do me—an honour not suited to such as I am.

Your MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

Varchi had written to Michelangelo asking his opinion as to which of the two branches of art, painting and sculpture, was the more noble. The subject was one which engaged the attention of many artists of the day, and letters from Vasari, Palladio and others are given in Gaye's *Carteggio Inedito.* Varchi collected these various opinions and published them in book form in Florence, in 1549, "with a letter written by Michelagnolo, and others concerning the question aforesaid, written by the most excellent painters and sculptors."

From Rome, . . . [1549].

[*To Messer Luca Martini.*]

MAGNIFICO MESSER LUCA,—Messer Bartolomeo Bettini has handed me your letter containing a small book in which there is a Commentary upon one of my sonnets. It is true that I wrote the sonnet in question, but the Commentary must have been composed in heaven. It is indeed admirable: I do not give this as my own unsupported opinion, but as the opinion of men well able to judge, and especially of Donato Gianotti, who is never tired of reading it. He sends greetings to you all. As to the sonnet itself, I

am fully aware of its true worth, but be that as it may, I cannot help feeling a certain amount of vanity seeing that I have been the cause of so beautiful and learned a Commentary. The words and praises bestowed upon me by the author show that he thinks me greater than I am in reality, and therefore I beg of you to employ such words to him on my behalf as are befitting to so much love, kindliness and courtesy. I beg of you to do this because I feel myself inadequate, and one who has a good reputation should be careful not to run risks : it is better to keep silence than to fall from such heights. I am old, and death has already robbed me of all the thoughts of youth. Let those who do not know what old age is wait patiently until it overtakes them ; they can never realise what it means beforehand. Commend me, as I have said already, to Varchi as one who has deep admiration for his great abilities and say that I am always at his service wherever I may be.

Yours, and at your service in all that lies in my power,

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, [June 8th, 1549].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—With regard to the farm at Monte Spertoli, it seems to me dishonest that they should ask four hundred crowns more than it is worth. It rather looks as if ye had appeared too eager about it and that they had put up the price on that account.

I do not think they would find a purchaser anywhere-else for it at so much more than it is worth. If it were a question of fifty or a hundred crowns I should not mind so much: however, I leave it in your hands, and if ye think well to take it, do so, for whatever ye may do will be well done. I have not been able to draw up the power of attorney for I can decipher so little of thy letter that I get an attack of fever every time I attempt to read it. I will try to draw it up during the coming week if I can make out what is required of me. I have received the Trebbiano: the little bundle (*fardelletto*) mentioned in thy letter has not yet arrived. As to my illness, I am much better compared with what I was before. For about two months past I have had to drink, every morning and evening, a certain sort of water which breaks up the stone. It is obtained from a spring about forty miles from Rome. It has broken mine and enabled me to pass water with tolerable ease. I shall have to store up a supply of it in the house and use nothing else either for drinking or cooking: and I shall have to alter my mode of life.

From Rome, July 19th, 1549.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—Thy last letter has arrived containing an account of all the expenses incurred in obtaining possession of the property at Chianti. It was unnecessary to send me this, for everything is quite satisfactory if, as thou sayest, the money was well spent. As to the land adjoining it mentioned in thy

letter, I have already replied that thou wert to obtain possession of that also, if there were no other charges upon it. Nothing more seems to have been done concerning the land at Monte Spertoli. It would be well to buy it if it were for sale, being as thou sayest the property of minors. I have this day received a letter from the weaver's wife saying she wants thee to marry a girl whose father is a Capponi and her mother one of the Niccolini: she is at present in the convent of Candeli. She wrote me a whole discourse including a short sermon exhorting me to live a good life and give alms: and she says she has entreated thee to live a Christian life—I expect she will have told thee that she has been inspired by God to wed thee to this girl. I fancy she would find it more satisfactory to attend to her weaving or spinning than to spend her time distributing all this sanctity around her. It seems as if she is aiming at becoming a second edition of Sister Domenica: however, place no confidence in her. And as for thy getting married, which seems to me a necessary step, I cannot advise thee in one direction or another as I know nothing about the citizens of Florence, as thou mayest suppose and as I have already told thee on many occasions. It therefore behoves thee to give thy diligent attention to the matter and to pray God that He will provide suitably for thee. When thou findest a damsel to thy liking I should be pleased to hear all about her before any definite step is taken. I have nothing more to add.

On the 19th day of July, 1549.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

The Sister Domenica mentioned in the letter was a self-appointed prophetess who, however, gained a great reputation during the siege of Florence, and whose counsels were eagerly listened to by the rulers of the state.

From Rome, [February . . ., 1550?].

To Messer Giovan Francesco Fattucci, Priest of Santa Maria del Fiore, my very dear friend, at Florence.

MESSER GIOVAN FRANCESCO, MY DEAR FRIEND,—Although we have not written a word to each other during the last few months our long and sincere friendship is not as a consequence forgotten; nor is it that I do not desire your welfare as much as I have ever done, nor that I do not love you with all my heart, and more, for the numberless pleasures you have given me. With regard to the old age which bears upon us equally, I should like to hear how yours is treating you, for I do not like mine very much. Therefore I beg you to send me a few lines. You know we have a new Pope, and who he is. All Rome is rejoicing, thanks be to God, and no one expects to derive anything but the greatest benefit to all, especially to the poor, because of his liberality. As far as my private affairs are concerned, I should be glad, and you would bestow a great service upon me, if you would let me know how matters go with Lionardo, telling me the exact truth without reserve; for he is a young man and I am very anxious for his welfare, the more so as he is alone and has nobody to advise him. I have nothing further to add, except

this that to-day Messer Tomao [Tommaso] de' Cavalieri asked me on his behalf to thank Varchi for a certain small book of his which has just been published, in which he speaks most honourably of him, and not less so of me. He has given me a sonnet I wrote for him about the same time and asks me to send it to him [Varchi] by way of justification. I am sending it with this: if you like it, give it to him; if you do not, throw it on the fire, and bear in mind that I am fighting with death and that my thoughts are bent on other matters, though sometimes one is obliged to indulge in this sort of thing. I beg you to thank the said Messer Benedetto for the great honour done me in his sonnets, as already mentioned, and I offer him my services, such as they are.

Your MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

Benedetto Varchi, the historian and poet, whom Michelangelo describes as "the light and splendour of the Florentine Academy." The book here referred to is Varchi's *Commento* on a sonnet written by Michelangelo, already mentioned in an earlier letter.

From Rome, March 1st, 1550.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I did not write to thee for the purpose of demanding all these accounts of expenses, but to say that I cannot give thee an answer about the Chianti land until I hear how much money thou hast to spare, because I wish to invest the remainder of

my capital here in some form of annuity for myself. I gather from what thou sayest that there still remains sufficient for the purchase of the said land: therefore ye had better look into the matter and, if ye are satisfied that the security is a good one, obtain possession at all costs if ye consider it suited to your purpose and a good investment. I will think for my own future myself.

To tell the truth, if thou hadst succeeded in finding an investment bringing in a hundred crowns a year I would have taken it up, and I am still ready to do so if ever thou shouldst find anything that seems suited to my needs. But as I have already said, I doubt whether anything of the sort is to be had.

On the first day of March, 1550.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

From Rome, August 1st, 1550.

[*To Messer Giovan Francesco Fattucci*,
in Florence.]

MESSER GIOVAN FRANCESCO, DEAR FRIEND,—As I have occasion to send a letter to the painter Giorgio [Vasari] in Florence, I make so bold as to put you to a little trouble; that is to say, I wish you to give the enclosed letter to him, as I believe he is a friend of yours. And as I have nothing else to tell you, but at the same time do not wish my letter to appear too short, I am sending you some of the poems (*novelle*) I used to write for the Marchesa di Pescara [Vittoria Colonna], who had always the greatest affection for me and I no less for her. When she died I lost a

very great friend. I have no more to add. I am much as usual, supporting the afflictions of old age with patience. I expect it is the same with you.

On the first day of August, 1550.

From Rome, August 7th, 1550.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

Lionardo,—After the arrival of the Trebbiano and the shirts I had no further occasion to write to thee, but it would now be advisable for me to have in my possession the two Briefs drawn up by Pope Paul referring to the provision granted to me for life by His Holiness while I was in his service in Rome. (*) These Briefs were sent to thee among the other documents in that box thou hast received and would have leaden seals attached to them. Thou wilt easily recognise which they are. They can be wrapped up in a piece of waxed cloth and put into a small box securely done up. If thou canst arrange to send them to me by a trustworthy person who will be sure to take care of them, send them on and make the carrier give thee such security against their loss as in thy judgment will assure their safe delivery. I wish to show them to the Pope [Julius III.] so that he may understand that according to them I am His Holiness' creditor for, I think, more than two thousand crowns—not that it is likely to be of any

(*) See p. 177. The second brief bears date, December 18th, 1539, and refers to the painting in the Sistine Chapel and to the Tomb of Julius.

use to me, but merely for my own satisfaction. I think the letter-carrier might be able to bring them as it would be only a small packet.

Nothing more has been said about thy getting married: everybody here tells me to find a wife for thee as though I had a thousand of them in my wallet. I cannot do anything in the matter because I know nothing of the condition of our fellow citizens. I should very much like thee to marry, and I think it is necessary that thou shouldst do so; but as I have already said on several occasions, I cannot do anything towards assisting thy choice.

I have no more to add. Salute the priest for me, and also my friends

On the 7th day of August, 1550.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, August 16th, 1550.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I learn from thy last letter that Cepperello is willing to sell the farm adjoining ours at Settignano which that woman holds for life. I Cepperello wishes to sell it now the price to be paid ought to be based upon a fair assumption of how many years she is likely to live, as the property must necessarily remain hers during her life, passing into our hands only at her death. This does not appear to me a very good arrangement because of many things which might happen and which would be full of danger to our interests while we were not in

possession. Therefore it would be better to wait until she dies. If Cepperello comes to speak to me about it I will tell him what I think, but I shall not bother to go to him.

I wrote to thee about two Briefs, as thou knowest already: if thou canst find some trustworthy person who would be sure to deliver them, send them; if not, do nothing.

With regard to thy taking a wife, thou sayest thou wishest first to come to Rome and talk the matter over with me. My living arrangements are exceedingly bad and cost me a great deal, as thou wilt see for thyself; but I do not mean by this that thou art not to come, though it seems to me better that thou shouldst wait until the latter half of September, and in the meantime I will try to get a good and clean serving-woman, though it will be difficult because they are all whores and pigs (*puttane e porche*). Let me hear from thee. I pay ten *julii* a month: I live poorly, but I pay well.

A daughter of Altovito Altoviti was mentioned to me to-day in connection with thy marriage: she has neither father nor mother and is now in the convent of San Martino. I do not know her and I do not know how to advise thee in the matter.

On the 16th day of August, 1550.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONAROTTI,
in Rome.

Michelangelo appears to have misjudged the Roman women, as he found a suitable servant within a week.

From Rome, September 6th, 1550.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—Thou hast written to say that the Cepperello farm might be bought by someone we should not like to have as a neighbour. In my last letter I replied that thou wert quite free to buy it, but that I should not send thee any more money. Since then I have not heard from any of you. As to thy coming here to see me: as to these visits, I know quite well what sort of visits they are, and if thou hadst no other reason for coming thou mightest as well stay away. But since thou desirest to come, judging from thy letter, come as quickly as possible so that thou mayest return to Florence before the rains begin. I have nothing to add.

On the 6th day of September, 1550.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

Lionardo went to Rome at the beginning of October, returning to Florence early in November.

From Rome, December 20th, 1550.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I have received the *marzolini*, there were twelve cheeses in all. They are most excellent and I shall give some to my friends and keep the remainder for the house. But as I have said to thee on former occasions, thou art to send me nothing more unless I ask for it; especially send nothing that costs thee money.

As to thy getting married, which is a necessary step, I have nothing to say, unless it be that thou must not consider the dowry; for that is an index rather of worldly possessions than of character. Thou must seek only for nobility and for soundness of body: and thou must seek for personal goodness rather than anything else. As to beauty, as thou art not thyself the most handsome youth in Florence, it skills not for thee to trouble overmuch about it, provided that she be neither deformed nor diseased. I have nothing to add on this head.

Yesterday I received a letter from Messer Giovanfrancesco asking whether I had any poems composed by the Marchesa di Pescara. Please tell him that I will look, and send him an answer next Saturday, although I am under the impression that I have nothing of hers, as many things were taken when I was ill away from home. When thou hearest of some case of extreme poverty in the house of a noble citizen, especially if it be a family where there are daughters to be married, I should be glad if thou wouldst inform me thereof, because I would like to help them for the good of my own soul.

On the 20th of December, 1550.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, February 28th, 1551.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—From thy last letter I learn that thou hast as yet done nothing towards getting married. I

am not at all pleased, for it is incumbent upon thee to take a wife, and as I have told thee in writing on several occasions I do not think—considering thy present position and all that will eventually come to thee—that thou needest look for a dowry but only for goodness, health and gentle breeding. Consider that to marry a girl of good breeding and good character with soundness of body and nobility of blood but no money would be an act of charity: and that if thou doest this thou wilt be free from all fear of feminine frivolity and extravagance. The result would be increased tranquillity within the house. As to the suggestion that thou desirest to ennoble thyself, as thou saidst in a former letter, there is no possibility of truth in it, for it is known that we are descended from the Florentine citizens of ancient days. Think over all I have said, for fortune has not favoured thee in face or figure so extensively as to make thee worthy of the first beauty in Florence. Be very careful that thou deceive not thyself.

As to the alms I said I wished thee to give away in Florence; thou writest asking how much I wish to give as though I were in a position to give away my crowns by the hundred. The last time thou wast here thou broughtest me a piece of cloth which I think I understood thee to say cost from twenty to twenty-five crowns. This piece of cloth, this piece of cloth (*e questi e questi*) I then thought of bestowing in Florence in charity for the souls of us all. Then, when this terrible famine began to spread through Rome I converted it into bread, and if no relief comes I doubt whether we shall not all die of starvation.

I have nothing to add. Greet the priest in my name, and say that as soon as I can I will answer him.

On the last day of February, 1551.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

From Rome, March 7th, 1551.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I have received the pears, that is to say, 97 *bronche*, since that is what ye call them. There is no occasion for me to say more about them. As to the question of thy marriage, I wrote to thee last Saturday expressing my views—that is to say, thou art not to consider the dowry side of the transaction but to seek only for gentle blood, noble birth, a proper bringing up and a healthy body. I cannot say anything more as to whom especially thou shouldest choose, for I know as much about them as a man who has never been in Florence. Somebody spoke to me to-day about a girl belonging to the Alessandri family, but I obtained no precise information concerning her. If I hear any more I will tell thee in my next letter.

About a month ago Messer Giovanfrancesco asked me whether I had any poems composed by the Marchesa di Pescara. I have a small book in parchment which was given me by her about ten years ago containing a hundred and three sonnets, apart from those she sent me afterwards from Viterbo written on vegetable

parchment. There are forty of these latter. I had them bound up in the same book, and at the time I lent them to a number of people, with the result that they have all been published. I have in addition a number of letters addressed to me by her from Orvieto and Viterbo. This is all I have of the Marchesa's; however, show this letter to the priest and let me know what he wishes me to do.

As to the money I told thee to give away in alms in Florence a short while ago—I think I wrote last Saturday—I shall have to exchange the money for bread on account of the famine which has gripped us here: it is so great that unless relief comes in some form or another I doubt whether we shall not all die of starvation.

On the 7th day of March, 1551.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

The *Rime* of Vittoria Colonna, Marchesa di Pescara, were first published in 1538, a new and larger edition being published in the following year. A third edition appeared in 1544.

From Rome, June 28th, 1551.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—A week ago I received a load of Trebbiano, that is to say forty 4 (*sic*) flasks: I have given away some of it to several of my friends, and it is considered to be the best of this [last] year's vintage

that has reached Rome. I thank thee for it: I have nothing more to add on the subject.

As to the proposed alliance with the Nasi, thou writest saying that thou hast not yet had a reply from Andrea Quaratesi. I do not think much reliance is to be placed on him in this sort of affair, and the time that is passing away with so much waiting will not return. It seems to me there ought to be a girl somewhere of noble birth, good education and irreproachable character, but in very poor circumstances: if such were to be found it would be very much to our purpose, as it would ensure thy living in peace. For the love of God, take her without a dowry. I think thou couldst find something of the kind in Florence, and it would give me the liveliest satisfaction, for thou wouldst be free from the fear of frivolity and extravagance, and wouldst be a benefactor to someone else, as others have been to thee. But thou art become a rich man without knowing how. I do not wish to tell thee the miserable state in which I found our family when I began to work for it first: a whole volume would not suffice for my story, and I never received any return save ingratitude. Ask God, therefore, to put it into thy heart to realise what thy position is, and go not in search of pomps and empty vanities.

On the 28th day of June, 1551.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

From Rome, December 19th, 1551.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—Thy last letter tells me about the shortness of sight, (*) which seems to me no small defect. However, my answer is that I have given no promises here, so that if thou likewise hast given no promises in Florence I think it would be best to let the matter drop if thou art certain that she is short-sighted; for as thou sayest, it is a defect that goes by heredity. Once more I would impress upon thee what I have already written on many occasions: thou art to seek out someone who is healthy, more for the love of God than to secure a dowry, provided that she be a good woman and of noble birth. Do not let it trouble thee if she be poor, for then she will bring thee the more tranquillity. On this head I have no more to say. I am an old man and have but little capital, and even that I do not wish to spend here. Therefore, when thou hearest of some house or property which would be a sound investment for the sum of 1,500 crowns, I shall be ready to buy it. Give the matter thine attention, therefore, so that if I were to die here—as may happen any day—the money may not be lost to thee.

On the 19th day of December, 1551.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

(*) The damsel under discussion at the moment was the daughter of Filippo Girolami, her mother being the sister of Bindo Altoviti. Lionardo, having assured himself as to her defective sight, did not marry her, as will be seen from the following letters.

From Rome, February 20th, 1552.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I have had a conversation here with the girl's uncle, who said he was very much surprised that we should throw her over, and that some avaricious person desirous of obtaining the dowry for himself or of inheriting her property must have interfered. I deem it advisable to tell thee what has been said.

A letter of thine has just been brought in as I sit writing, in which thou tellest me of a daughter of Carlo di Giovanni Strozzi. I knew Giovanni Strozzi when I was a lad, and he was a worthy fellow—I cannot say more about him. I also knew Carlo, so that I think the match might be a good one.

As to the property mentioned by thee, I do not want one near Florence; it would be more suitable if it were in Chianti. Therefore, if thou shouldst find a good investment I am ready to buy it, and I am not particular as to a couple of hundred crowns.

As to thy choice of a wife, I have no opportunity of hearing about anything here, for I have no intercourse with the Florentines and still less with other people.

I am old, as I said in my last letter, and in order to avoid raising anybody's hopes needlessly, if anybody should have cherished such hopes, I am thinking of making a will in which all I have in Florence will be left to my brother Gismondo and to thee, my nephew, with the stipulation that neither of ye shall be free to touch any of it without the consent of the

other. If thou shouldst die without legitimate heirs everything is to go to San Martino ; that is to say, the income is to be given to poor people for the love of God, that is to say to impoverished citizens, or to be laid out in any better way ye may be able to suggest.

On the 20th day of February, 1552.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, April 1st, 1552.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—With regard to thy marriage : I have just heard from a friend that the defect which caused thee to give up all thought of the damsel I wrote about does not exist, that is to say, she is not short-sighted. He declares it was a friend of thine who told thee this because he wanted thee to marry some other person he had in view, but that she was not as yet of marriageable age, and therefore he invented this story so as to make thee delay until she was ready for thee. It seems to me that thou shouldst take her, if it is really true that there is no defect in her vision. Have a care that thou be not led by the nose by people who are of inferior rank to thee. I have nothing more to add on this head. Bear in mind that time is slipping away, and that I do not wish the whole of my life to turn out to have been spent in labouring for strangers; but I hope my will will provide for that.

On the first day of April.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

From Rome, April 23rd, 1552.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I wrote to thee of what I had heard here, that is to say, that it was not true about the short-sight; and I mentioned other things, as thou must already know. Now thou writest to say that she *is* short-sighted beyond all doubt, but that thou art ready to take her if that is my desire. I reply that if the matter is as thou sayest thou art to think no more about it, but that thou art to try to find a wife at all costs and not to think about a dowry if the girl be the daughter of a citizen and of good disposition. Do not bother about such of her relations as may perhaps be averse to the match, and endeavour to find the sort of wife who will not be ashamed, if there be need for it, to look after the saucepans and other domestic matters herself, for then thy substance will not be wasted in frivolity and extravagance. I hear that there is great misery in Florence, especially among the nobles: therefore if thou wilt forego the dowry I think thou couldst find something suitable. As I have already said, consider that thou art about to do an act of charity.

On the 23rd day of April, 1552.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

From Rome, June 24th, 1552.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I have received the Trebbiano, forty-four flasks, that is, for which I thank thee. It seemed

to me very good, but I could not enjoy it myself, because after I had given some of it away to my friends I found after a few days that what remained had turned to vinegar. If I live another year, therefore, it will be quite enough if thou wilt send me ten flasks only, if it can be sent as part of a load for someone else.

The Bishop, de' Minerbetti, (*) was here to-day, and meeting him in company with the painter Giorgio [Vasari], he asked me about thy marriage; and forthwith we discussed the whole matter. He said he had a good wife to give thee and that it would not be necessary to take her merely out of charity. I asked no more for fear I should appear in too great a hurry. Now thou writest saying that some friend or other of thine in Florence has been talking to thee and urging thee to take a wife, adding that I am very anxious thou shouldst do so. All this thou mightest have learnt for thyself from the many letters I have written thee. Once more I repeat that I wish thee to marry, so that our family may not finish with this generation—although if it did I do not suppose it would precipitate the end of the world: but every animal endeavours to secure the continuance of its own species. Therefore it is my desire that thou shouldst take a wife, when thou findest a suitable maiden; that is to say, one with good health and well brought up, the daughter of parents of good repute. If in these respects she is all that can be desired, thou art not to look for a dowry in addition. But if thou

(*) Bishop of Arezzo.

considerest thou art not thyself sufficiently healthy to take a wife, it would be better to endeavour to preserve thine own life than to kill thyself in begetting children. This is my last word on the subject, for I see that the business is being drawn out interminably, and I do not wish thee to do for my sake what thou wouldst not do for thine own ; for thou wouldst never be happy and I should not then be satisfied.

As to my choosing a wife for thee here, thou mayst well suppose that I do not go into the world where such things are to be met, for I have no dealings with anybody, least of all with Florentines. I should be very glad however if thou wouldst inform me when thou hast found someone to thy liking, and before settling anything. I have nothing more to add. Pray God that He will find thee a good wife.

On the 24th day of June, 1552.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, [October . . ., 1552].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—It gave me great happiness to hear that thou art satisfied with the damsel. But as thou art not sure which of the two thou sawest together is the one in question, have a care that they give thee not one instead of the other, as happened to a friend of mine once. Keep thine eyes open and do not be hasty. As for the dowry, I will arrange matters and do all thou mayst suggest, but I was told here that there was no dowry at all. Proceed slowly, therefore,

for thou canst nevermore turn back and I should be exceedingly unhappy if thou wert dissatisfied over the dowry or any other matter. As I have already told thee, the alliance pleases me very much, and if in addition the damsel possesses all the qualities she ought to possess I do not think thou shouldst hesitate, even if the dowry be not as large as might be desired. I have told thee that thou shouldst keep thine eyes open because I do not think the case can be as it has been represented, since pressure has been brought to bear upon thee, and knowing who are the parties interested. It would be necessary to have some enquiry made so that we may do what is best, for a man marries but once in his life.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

From Rome, October 28th, 1552.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—In this letter thou wilt find my reply to Michele Guicciardini on the subject of thy marriage. I have written to say I am ready to give my own property as security for the dowry, whenever and however thou mayst think suitable, and I have asked him not to begrudge a little trouble taken in this matter. Deliver the letter to him, therefore, and he will tell thee how I propose to give the security, and that I am ready to adopt any other course thou mayst prefer. And this, also, I tell thee—beware how thou buyest a cat in a sack; examine the damsel very carefully with thine own eyes—*che tu facci di veder cogli*

ochi tuo' molto bene—for she might be lame or diseased, and thou wouldst never be satisfied. However, be as diligent over the matter as thou canst, and commit thy cause to God. I have nothing to add, and writing gives me great discomfort.

On the 28th day of October, 1552.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, [November 21st, 1552].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—In my opinion things that begin badly cannot end well. From thy last letter I learn that all those promises which were made quite voluntarily with regard to the damsel have been withdrawn. I tell thee that although I have written on many occasions urging thee not to look for a dowry I do not think thou art therefore obliged to submit to the breaking of promises. As contempt is a powerful weapon I counsel thee to have no more to do with it, unless thou seest so many other advantages that thou canst afford to overlook smaller details. As far as this is concerned I do not know exactly how the matter stands, and consequently do not know what to say. Commit thyself to God and be confident that all will turn out for the best. I am sure that, by His grace, it must end well.

In my last I told thee to try to get a suitable house in a good position, for if ever I should be obliged to return to Florence I should be glad to have a place to live in, in addition to which I am an

old man and would like to invest the little capital I have here and to live as tranquilly as possible. I have nothing more to add. I do not answer Guicciardino for the reason that I have not been able to read his letter. I cannot think where either of ye learnt to write. Make my excuses with him and salute both him and Francesca in my name.

From Rome, March 25, 1553.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I learn from thy last letter that, concerning thy marriage, thou hast again opened negociations for the Ridolfi girl.(*) It must be more than four months ago since I wrote, in reply to a letter from thee mentioning two girls, saying that either would be satisfactory to me. After that I had never a word more from thee on the subject, so that I am at a loss to understand thee and cannot guess what thou art about. These negociations have been going on so long that I am weary of them and do not know what more I can say to thee. As to the Ridolfi, if all thou hearest of her pleases thee, take her: what I told thee formerly about the security I still stand by. If thou art not content to take this girl, nor any other I leave the whole matter to thee. For sixty years I have devoted myself to your welfare: now I am an old man and must think of my own. Therefore, follow thine own inclination, for what thou doest

(*) She was the daughter of Donato Ridolfi, and was eventually chosen by Lionardo.

concerns thyself and not me: I have but a little space to remain here. With thy letter I received one from Guicciardino, but I need send him no separate reply as he writes of the same matter. Salute both him and Francesca in my name. I have nothing to add.

On the 25th day of March, 1553.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

From Rome, April 22nd, 1553.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I learn from thy last letter that the renewed negociations in connection with Donato Ridolfi's daughter have ended satisfactorily, thanks be to God. I pray that by His grace the marriage may be concluded. With regard to the security for the dowry, I have had the power of attorney drawn up in thy name and am sending it with this letter so that thou canst secure the dowry, 1,500 ducats at seven *lire* the ducat as mentioned by thee, by making it a charge upon whatever portion of my property seemeth to thee most suitable. I have spoken with Messer Lorenzo Ridolfi, and I greeted him in the proper form as well as I was able. I have no more to add at the moment. Thou wilt let me know how the affair proceeds, and I will try and think of some present to send her according to custom.

On the 22nd day of April, 1553.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, April 30th, 1553.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—Directly I heard from thee that the marriage contract had been made I sent thee the power of attorney so that the dowry might be secured by making it a charge upon my estate: that is to say, 1,500 ducats at seven *lire* the ducat. I suppose thou hast already received it and that it is in the necessary form. The notary who drew it up is a man of weight, being Notary to the Florentine Consulate and to the Apostolic Chamber.

I learn from thy last letter that both parties are satisfied with the alliance, for which I thank God: and when Urbino comes back from Urbino—which will be within the next fortnight—I will fulfil my obligations.

On the last day of April, 1553.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, May 20th, 1553.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—From thy last letter I learn that thou hast taken thy wife home and art well pleased with her: also, thou greetest me in her name and sayest that thou hast not as yet given security for the dowry. Thy satisfaction is a source of very great pleasure to me and I think we ought to thank God unceasingly with all our powers. As to securing the dowry, since thou hast not already done this hold thy

hand and keep thine eyes open, for trouble always arises from these money matters. I do not understand much about it, but I should suppose all these things ought to have been settled before the bride went to thy house. As to thy greetings in her name, thank her on my behalf and make her a suitable reply by word of mouth, for I should not know how to make one in writing. I should like it to be realised that she is the wife of one of my brother's children, however, but hitherto I was not able to give any proofs because Urbino had not then returned. He came back two days ago, and I shall now be able to demonstrate the relationship. I have been told that a fine string of valuable pearls would be a suitable gift. I have accordingly instructed a friend of Urbino, a jeweller, to find me one and I hope he will be successful: but do not tell her anything about it for the present. If thou wouldst rather I gave her something else, let me know. I have nothing to add. Take care of thine own life; be considerate and thoughtful, for there are always more widows left in the world than widowers.

On the 20th of May, 1553.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, June 21st, 1553.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I have received the load of Trebbiano, consisting of forty-four flasks. It is exceedingly good, but thou hast sent too much since there is nobody to

whom I can give any of it now as I did formerly. Therefore, if I am still alive next year I do not wish thee to send me any at all.

I have provided two rings for Cassandra, (*) one with a diamond and the other with a ruby, but I do not know by whom to send them. Urbino tells me that a friend of his, a certain Lattanzio da San Gimignano, will be setting out from Rome after the Feast of St. John, and it has occurred to me that I might get him to bring them, or rather that thou shouldst send someone to me who may be trusted not to change or to steal them. Let me know as soon as possible what thou thinkest best to be done. I should like thee to have them valued as soon as they arrive so as to see whether I have been cheated, because I am ignorant of such matters.

On the 21st day of June, 1553.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, August 5th, 1553.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I have received the shirts, there were eight of them, and they are very beautiful, especially as regards the material. It troubles me, however, to think that I am depriving thee of them, because I have quite enough of my own. Please thank Cassandra in my name, and place my services at her disposal here if she desire anything in Rome or

(*) Cassandra Ridolfi, Lionardo's bride.

elsewhere, for I will not fail to do her bidding. I have received thine acknowledgement for the two rings as well as the estimate of their value. I was very glad to have it because now I know that I was not cheated. I realise that I have only sent her a mere trifle, but we will supplement it on another occasion with something she may like to have, if thou canst tell me of anything. There is nothing to add on this head. Take care of thy health and live in peace together.

On the 5th day of August, 1553.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, October 24th, 1553.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I learn from thy letter that Cassandra is expecting to become a mother, which news gave me the very greatest joy, for I hope that after all we may now have somebody to inherit from us, whether it prove to be a girl or a boy. We should give thanks to God for all He has done. Cepperello has returned to Rome in the last few days, and tells Urbino he wants to have a talk with me. I suppose he wants to talk about that farm of his which adjoins ours [at Settignano]. Let me know if he has discussed the matter with any of you in Florence, for it would be very much to our purpose if we were able to get hold of it.

I have nothing to add. Greet Messer Giovan

Francesco in my name and let me know how he fares.

On the 24th day of October.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

The *Ricordi*, under date of January 1st, 1554, contain the following entry concerning an act of charity which Michelangelo was not allowed to perform :—

"Be it known that on the first day of January, 1554, I Michelagniolo have taken into my house, intending to find her a husband, a daughter of Michele, the pork butcher (*pizzicarolo*) of the Macello de' Corvi, her baptismal name being Vincenzia. I am taking her on the following understanding, that if during the next four years she shall behave well in all things concerning the welfare of both body and soul, I will give her a marriage portion of fifty gold crowns in gold at the end of that period; and I undertake further that the said marriage portion shall be made a charge upon good security. As a guarantee of which I, Michelagniolo, have made this memorandum with my own hand.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome."

On the same page there is another entry concerning Vincenzia:—

"And to-day, the 26th day of September, 1555, there came to my house Iacopo, the brother of the said Vincenzia, and threatening to use force against Urbino, who was ill and in bed, took her out of my house and led her away. This was witnessed by

Messer Roso de Rosi of Castello Durante and by Dionigio, who were at work in St. Peter's, as well as by other persons.

"I Roso de li Rosi da Castello Durante, was a witness of the incident set forth above, and as a witness of the truth thereof I have written this and subscribed it with my own hand."

From Rome, [March . . ., 1554].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I received a letter from thee during the past week in which thou speakest of the continued happiness thou findest with Cassandra. We ought to thank God for it, and all the more so because such happiness is a rare thing. Thank her for me and commend me to her: and if there is anything here she would care to have thou must send me word. As to the name of the child ye are expecting, it seems to me that he ought to be called after thy father; if it be a girl, give her my mother's name: that is to say, the name should be either Buonarroto or Francesca. Nevertheless, I leave the choice with thee. I have nothing to add. Take care of thyself and conserve thy health.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, April 21st, 1554.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I learn from thy letter that Cassandra has given birth to a fine boy and that she is going on

well, and that ye intend to call him Buonarroto. All this has afforded me the greatest happiness. God be praised for it. May He make a good man of him so that he may grow up to be an honour and a staff of support to our house. Give my thanks to Cassandra and commend me to her. I have no more to add. My letter is brief because I have no time to spare.

On the 21st day of April, 1554.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

From Rome, April . . ., 1554.

To Giorgio Vasari,

MESSER GIORGIO, DEAR FRIEND,—I had very great pleasure in reading your last letter and to see that you still remember the poor old man; and more because you were present at the ceremony you speak of, and have seen the birth of another Buonarroto. For this information I thank you as much as I can, or know how to, but I entirely disapprove of these pomps and vanities, because no man ought to rejoice when all the rest of the world is in tears. And so I think Lionardo shows little judgment in celebrating the birth of a child with rejoicings which ought to be reserved for the death of one who has ended a life of good deeds. I have no news to tell you. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the love you bear me, even though I am unworthy of it. Everything here is much as usual.

The I-don't-know-what-th day of April, 1554.

Your MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

Photo Anderson

FRESCO OF S. PETER'S CHURCH

As designed by Michelangelo, in the Biblioteca of the Vatican

From Rome, September 19th, 1554.

To Giorgio Vasari,

MESSER GIORGIO, DEAR FRIEND,—You will say that I am indeed old and in my dotage to want to write sonnets; but as many people say I am in my second childhood I wished to act up to my part. Your letter discovered to me how much love you bear me: let me say that undoubtedly I should be happy to lay down my feeble bones beside that of my father as you entreat me, but if I were to go away from here now I should bring a great disaster upon the fabric of St. Peter's, which would be a great outrage and a still greater sin. But when I have carried the whole composition to such a point that it cannot be altered I hope to do as you ask, if meanwhile it has not become an offence for me to keep several envious persons on tenterhooks who are expecting my speedy departure for another world.

On the 19th day of September, 1554.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, [March . . ., 1555].

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I learnt from thy last letter of Michelagniolo's death, which caused me as much grief as his birth had given me happiness. We must be patient and comfort ourselves with the thought that it is better for him to die so than to die of old age. Do thy best to preserve thine own life, for our property

would be in a bad way if there were no men left to look after it.

Cepperello tells Urbino that he is going to Florence and that the woman who had a life interest in that farm we discussed some time ago is dead. (*) I expect he will come to see thee. If he will sell it at a fair price and give good security, take it and let me know the amount, so that I may send the money.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, September 28th, 1555.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I learn from thy last letter that the Duke [of Florence, Cosimo de' Medici] has been to see the two models for the façade of San Lorenzo, and that his Lordship has asked for them. I tell thee, thou shouldst have sent them immediately to any place his Lordship desired without writing to me about it first; and thou art to do this with anything we possess, if there is anything of ours he may care to have.

I enclose in this a reply to Messer Giorgio's [Vasari] letter, giving him such information as I can about the staircase of the Libreria, (†) but the little I can recall to mind is more like a dream than anything else. I have sent thee his letter open so that thou canst read it. Give it to him open as I send it.

(*) See pp. 260, 262, 281.
(†) The Laurenziana, in Florence.

I am glad to hear that thou, Cassandra and the child are all well, though I am very distressed at the news about Gismondo and am much grieved thereby: but I also am not free from ailments, and I have many worries and anxieties in addition, especially as Urbino has been ill in bed for the last three weeks and is not up yet. It has given me great inconvenience and anxiety. Let us thank God for all He sends us. Comfort Gismondo on my behalf and help him as much as thou art able.

On the 28th of September, 1555.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, November 30th, 1555.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I learnt from thy letter, not without the deepest sorrow, that Gismondo my brother was dead. We must be patient, and thank God that he was conscious to the end and died fortified by all the sacraments ordained by the Church.

I am in the midst of difficulties here, and Urbino is still in bed and in a critical condition. I do not know what is in store for us. It is as great a grief to me as if he had been my own son, for he has spent twenty-five faithful years in my service. As I am an old man I have not sufficient time before me to train another to fulfil my requirements, and therefore I am exceedingly troubled. If thou knowest of any devout persons in Florence ask them, I pray

thee, to intercede with God for his restoration to health.

On the 30th day of November, 1555.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

Gismondo died on November 13th, at the age of 74.

From Rome, December 4th, 1555.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—With regard to the property left by Gismondo mentioned in thy letter, I have to say that every portion is to be thine. Be careful to do all he directs in his will and to pray for his soul, which is all thou canst do for him.

I have to tell thee that yesterday, the 3rd of December and at the fourth hour, Francesco called Urbino passed from this life, to my deepest sorrow. He leaves me in affliction and distress so great that it would have been better for me if I had died too, such was the love I bore him. Nor did he deserve less of me, for he had grown to be a man of worth, full of loyalty and faithful service; wherefore I feel as though his death had deprived me also of life, and I can find no rest. I should accordingly be glad to see thee, though I do not know whether thou couldst leave Florence, for love of thy wife. Let me know if thou art able to come as far as Rome within the next month or six weeks, presuming always that the Duke [Cosimo] will give thee permission. I have said thou must get the Duke's permission for a good reason,

but perhaps it may not be necessary. Do as thou thinkest best, and let me have word. Write and say if thou canst come, and I will tell thee when to set out from Florence, for I wish to get Urbino's wife out of the house first.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, [. . ., 1555].

[*To Messer Bartolomeo Ammannati.*]

MESSER BARTOLOMEO, DEAR FRIEND,—It cannot be denied that Bramante was a skilful architect and the equal of any one from the time of the ancients until now. It was he who drew up the original plan of St. Peter's, not full of confusion but clear and straightforward, with ample light and detached from the surrounding buildings so that it did not in any way interfere with the Palace. It was considered to be a fine design, and there is still evidence that it was so: indeed, every architect who has departed from Bramante's plan, as Sangallo has done, has departed from the right way, and that this is true may be seen by anybody who looks at his model with unprejudiced eyes. In the first place, the outer ring of chapels he shows will exclude all the light provided by Bramante in his plan; and not only this, but he has not provided any fresh means of lighting, while there are so many gloomy lurking-holes both above and below that any sort of knavery could easily be practised, such as the hiding of banished persons, the coining of false money, the rape of nuns, and other misdemeanours: and when at night the time comes for shutting up the church it would require twenty-five men to make

sure that no person remained there in hiding, and it would be sufficiently difficult to find them. Furthermore, there would be this other drawback, that in adding this circular work to the outside of Bramante's plan it would be necessary to pull down the Pauline Chapel, the Offices of the Piombo, the Ruota, and many other buildings. I do not think that even the Sistine Chapel would remain intact. As to the portion of the external ring which has already been carried out, and which they say has cost a hundred thousand crowns, this is not true, for it could be done for sixteen thousand; and little would be lost if it were pulled down, as the prepared stone and the foundations could not be more welcome, and would be worth two hundred thousand crowns and three hundred years of time to the building. This is my opinion, expressed without prejudice, for to gain a victory in this matter would be to my very great loss. If you could let the Pope [Paul IV.] know what I think you would be doing me a service, as I do not feel well enough to write myself.

Your MICHELAGNIOLO.

[P.S.]—If the Sangallo model is carried out there would be worse to follow. Let us hope that all the work done in my time may not be ruined, for that would be a grave scandal.

From Rome, May 11th, 1555.

To Messer Giorgio, most excellent painter,
in Florence.

I was made to undertake the work upon St. Peter's against my will, and up to the present I have laboured

at it for eight years, not only without remuneration but even to my own hurt and sorrow. Now that the work is really progressing and there is money in hand, and especially as we are almost ready to begin the dome, I think it would spell disaster to the building if I were to desert it at this juncture. The whole Christian world would cry shame on me, and in the Day of Judgment this would be accounted to me for a grievous sin that I had committed. Therefore, my dear Messer Giorgio, I beg you to thank the Duke in my name for the very liberal offers set out in your letter, and to entreat His Lordship graciously and with his permission to allow me to carry this work here to such a condition that I could leave it with credit and honour to myself, and without committing a sin.

On the 11th day of May, 1555.

Your MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, June 22nd, 1555.

To my dear Messer Giorgio Vasari,
in Florence.

MESSER GIORGIO, DEAR FRIEND,—One evening lately I received a visit from a very sensible and worthy young man, that is to say Messer Lionardo [Marinozzi], the Duke's chamberlain, who with much love and affection made me the same offers on behalf of the Duke as I had received in your last letter. I gave him the same answer as I gave you, that is to say I told him to thank the Duke in my name for his generous offers and to express my gratitude in the

most suitable words he could find. I told him also to crave permission from His Lordship for me to continue my work at St. Peter's until I had carried it to such a condition that it could not be altered and given a different form: and I said that if I left it before it had reached that stage I should bring great disaster upon the structure, and at the same time be responsible for a great outrage and a great iniquity. I beg of you, for the love of God and of Saint Peter, to entreat the Duke to permit this; and commend me to His Lordship. Messer Giorgio, I know you are aware from the manner in which I write that I have reached the twenty-fourth hour of my day, and that no project arises in my brain which hath not the figure of Death graven upon it. God grant that I may keep him waiting for a year or two more.

On the 22nd day of June, 1555.

Your MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, January 11th, 1556.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I wrote to thee last week to say that Urbino was dead, and that I had been left with everything in disorder and myself very unhappy. I said also that I should be very glad if thou couldst come to see me. I now repeat that if thou canst arrange thine affairs in Florence in such a way that they will run no risk of loss or hurt of any sort for a month, thou art to get ready to come here. If thou shouldst not wish to do this, or if thou art likely to suffer loss,

or art afraid of the dangers of the road, or hast any other cause for hesitation, delay until thou thinkest the proper time has arrived. And when that time does arrive, come, for I am old and would dearly like to see thee again before I die. I have nothing to add. If anything different should have been written to thee concerning me pay no heed to it, but believe only what is in my letters.

On the 11th day of January, 1556.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

This is the last letter before the visit to Rome referred to took place.

From Rome, February 23rd, 1556.

To Messer Giorgio, my dear friend,
in Florence.

MESSER GIORGIO, DEAR FRIEND,—I find it difficult to write, yet in answer to yours I will send you a few lines. You know that Urbino is dead, for which I owe the greatest gratitude to God, although my loss is very heavy and my sorrow infinite. I am grateful, because while he lived he kept me alive, and in dying he has taught me how to die; not unwillingly, but welcoming death. I had him with me for twenty-six years and I found him ever loyal and faithful; and now that I have made him rich and had come to regard him as the staff and refuge of my old age he has been snatched from my sight, and I am left with the sole hope of seeing him again in Paradise. God has vouchsafed a sign thereof in his most tranquil death. My living on in this treacherous world in the

midst of so many vexations grieved him far more than the approach of his own end, although the better part of me has gone to the grave with him, and there remains only an endless sorrow. I commend myself to you and beg you, if it is not a trouble, to make my excuses to Messer Benvenuto [Cellini] for not having answered his letter, for my thoughts on the subject are so full of grief that I cannot write. Commend me to him, and I commend myself to you.

The 23rd day of February, 1556.

Your MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, March 7th, 1556.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I learn from thy letter that thou hast arrived safely, which gave me very great pleasure—the more so as thou hast found Cassandra and the others well. I am in the same state as when thou wert here; and as to getting back what belongs to me, so far I have got nothing but words. I shall keep as quiet as possible and watch the course of events.

With regard to my investing two thousand crowns in Florence in a house or some other form of property, as I said when thou wert here, I am still of the same way of thinking, so that if thou shouldst hear of anything suitable thou art to let me know about it.

Urbino's wife has sent asking me to secure for her seven *braccia* of black cloth, light and of good quality, saying she will send the money immediately. I should

therefore be glad if thou wilt send what is required and pay for it; and thou canst keep an account of whatever remains to be paid so that when I have occasion to send thee money we can adjust this matter at the same time. I have nothing to add. Thank Cassandra for me, and commend me to her.

On the 7th day of March, 1556.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, April 11th, 1556.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—Thou didst uncommonly well to give that cloth to such a scoundrel. I have been waiting a month for it here, and as I told others it was on its way there is the greatest disappointment at its non-arrival. I beg of thee to find out what that scoundrel of a muleteer has done with it, and if thou recoverest it send it here as quickly as possible. If it cannot be found, and if thou canst get hold of the man, have the thieving rascal beaten, make him pay back the money and send me another seven *braccia*. As if I had not sufficient troubles without this! I have had, and still have, more worries and annoyances than I could possibly relate.

Tell Francesca I will reply to her letter on another occasion, as at present I do not feel inclined for writing. Commend me to her and to Michele, and to all the rest.

On the 11th of April, 1556.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

A letter dated two weeks later announces that the cloth has arrived.

From Rome, May 31st, 1556.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I did not reply to thy last letter because I was unable to do so. I now say that when that farm of Cepperello's is to be got for a reasonable price thou art without fail to secure it: I say, further, that in addition to the Cepperello farm, thou art to invest two thousand crowns, in whatever seemeth to thee good, because I would rather thou shouldst buy a piece of land instead of the house if I cannot find what I am looking for, that is to say, something out in the open with plenty of air space about it.

I have received a letter from Francesca begging me to make an offering of ten crowns to her confessor on behalf of a poor girl he wishes to place in the Convent of Santa Lucia. I wish to do this for love of Francesca for I know she would not make the request if it were not a case deserving of charity: but I do not know how to convey the money to Florence. Find out, therefore, from the confessor whether he has a friend here he can trust: I would give the money directly I had the necessary information.

I am delighted to hear that Cassandra is well again. Commend me to her, and take care of thine own health.

On the last day of May, 1556.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, August 1st, 1556.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—Thy haste [with regard to Cepperello's farm] hast cost me at least fifty crowns more than it need have done; but what grieves me most is that thou shouldst have more regard for a piece of land than for what I say. Thou knowest well what I said to thee: thou wert to pretend that I did not want the land, and to make them come to us and beg us to buy. But thou, so soon as thou hadst returned to Florence, set the agents to negociate for it with the greatest eagerness. However, since it is done take care of thy health so that thou mayst live to enjoy it.

Yesterday I received a letter from thee written in great haste saying thou wert on the point of signing the contract, that the price was 650 gold crowns in gold, and that I was to give the money to Messer Francesco Bandini, who would have it paid in Florence through the Capponi. I will do as thou sayest, but I can do nothing before next week, for Bastiano, (*) who is only now getting better, will then be getting about again and will be able to take the money to the bank. I have nobody else to do anything for me. I have nothing further to add.

On the first day of August, 1556.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

(*) Bastiano Malenotti of San Gimignano, who entered Michelangelo's service in place of the lately deceased Francesco da Urbino.

From Rome, October 31st, 1556.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni, dearest nephew, in Florence. Sent to the Cortesi, who are asked to give it immediately into his hands. In Florence.

LIONARDO, DEAREST NEPHEW,—A few days ago I received a letter from thee to which I did not reply earlier as I had no opportunity for doing so. But now I will make up for it, not because I wish to astonish thee but so that thou mayst understand what has been happening. More than a month ago, finding that the work upon the fabric of St. Peter's had begun to slow down, I made up my mind to go to Loreto as an act of devotion; but when I got as far as Spoleto I found myself rather fatigued and accordingly remained there a little while to rest. The consequence was that I was prevented from carrying out my intention, for a man had been sent off post-haste to tell me I was to go back to Rome. In order not to disobey I therefore turned back towards Rome, where by the grace of God I now am. The condition of affairs with respect to these present perils is in God's hands, so that I need say no more, save that there is a good prospect of peace being established. Please God it may be so. Take care of thy health and pray God to help us.

From Rome, on the last day of October, 1556.

Thine, as a father,

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,

in Rome.

Michelangelo seems to have fled from Rome because of the dangers threatened by the approach of the Spanish forces which, marching from Naples, had already invaded the Patrimony. Paul IV. was Pope at this time.

From Rome, December 19th, 1556.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I have already written informing thee of my return to Rome. Afterwards I had a letter from thee saying Cassandra had given birth to a daughter who died a few days later, I was very sorry to hear about it, but it causes me no surprise, for it is our fortune that our family should not increase in Florence. Let us pray God that the one child ye have may be spared; and take thou care of thine own life so that all our possessions may not pass to the Spedale. I have nothing to add. Commend me to Cassandra and to God, for I have need of His assistance.

I enclose a letter for the painter, Messer Giorgio; give it to him as soon as possible.

On the 19th day of December, 1556.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, February 13th, 1557.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

When, about two years ago, Messer Lionardo, a servitor of the Duke of Florence, (*) came to visit me

(*) Lionardo Marinozzi of Ancona. He was Cosimo de' Medici's Chamberlain, as already noted.

here in Rome, he told me His Lordship would have been greatly pleased if I had then returned to Florence, and held out many inducements in the name of the Duke. I replied that I begged His Lordship to grant me sufficient time to enable me to leave the fabric of St. Peter's in such a condition that it could not be altered by the substitution of any other design for my own. As I heard nothing more about the matter I proceeded with the said work, but it has not yet reached the desired condition ; and not only that, but I am obliged now to construct a large wooden model (*) of the dome and lantern, so as to show the exact manner in which it is to be finished. All Rome has asked me to do this, the Most Reverend Cardinal di Carpi in especial, and I estimate that it will keep me in Rome for another year at least. I entreat the Duke, for the love of God and St. Peter, to grant me this delay so that I may come back to Florence freed from this haunting thought, and feeling that I shall never be obliged to return to Rome again. With reference to the work having been stopped, this is not true ; for between stone-masons, bricklayers and labourers, there are still sixty men at work, as may readily be seen, with good hope of continuing.

I wish thee to read this letter to the Duke and to beg His Lordship on my behalf to allow me to remain here for the period already mentioned which will be necessary before I can return to Florence ; for if my dispositions now incorporated in the structure

(*) This is the model now preserved in the *Archivio della Fabbrica di San Pietro.*

were to be changed, which certain envious persons here seek to compass, it would be as though in all this time I had accomplished nothing.

From Rome, March 28th, [155].

[*To Cornelia, the widow of Urbino.*]

I knew thou wert angry with me, but I could not discover why. Now, from thy last letter, I think I have found out the reason. When thou sentest me the cheeses thou didst write saying it was thy desire to send me other things as well, but that the handkerchiefs were not yet ready. To prevent thy spending money on my account I wrote saying thou wert to send me nothing more, but if there were anything I could get for thee it would give me the greatest pleasure to obey thee, knowing—as thou must of a surety know—the love I still bear toward Urbino, albeit he is dead, and towards all that belonged to him. As to my coming over to see the children, or thy sending Michelagniolo (*) here, I must tell thee how I am situated. To send Michelagniolo here would not be practicable because I have no women-folk, and none to look after the house : and besides, the child is still too young, and some accident might happen to him and give me occasion for regret. In addition to this, about a month ago the Duke of Florence very graciously made liberal offers to me, urging me to go back to Florence. I besought him to grant me so much time as would enable me to arrange my affairs here and to leave the fabric of St. Peter's in a satisfactory state. As a result I expect to be detained

(*) The little son of Urbino, Michelangelo's god-child.

here all this summer : and when I have done all I wish to do, and have adjusted thine affairs in connection with the Monte della Fede I hope to go back to Florence and remain there for ever, for I am an old man, and time will not suffice for me ever to return again to Rome. I shall pass through your city, and if thou desirest to place Michelagniolo in my charge I would rather have him in Florence with me than the children of my nephew Lionardo ; to teach him what I can and what his father would have wished him to know. I received thy last letter yesterday, the 27th day of March.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, May 4th, 1557.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I am sending fifty crowns of gold in gold through Messer Francesco Bandini, as I wish thee to send me eight *braccia* of black woollen cloth (*rascia nera*), the lightest and finest that can be got, and two *braccia* of silk (*ermisino*). Urbino's wife has asked me to get these things ; send them, therefore, as speedily as possible and let me know what they cost. What is left over of the fifty crowns is to be bestowed in charity wherever thou thinkest it is most needed. I have nothing to say more about this.

As thou knowest, I am an old man and have so many bodily infirmities that I feel myself to be not far from death ; therefore if I am still alive next September I should be glad if thou couldst come to Rome so as to

arrange my affairs and those of the family. Pray to God for me. I mean, (*) if I have not already arrived in Florence. I am enclosing the letter touching the money and another for Messer Giorgio Vasari. Give it to him as quickly as possible and salute him in my name : let me know that all this has been done. I have already said on former occasions that thou art not to believe anything thou mayest hear about me unless thou hast my letters confirming it.

Bastiano di San Gimignano, in order to drive me back to Florence, and perhaps to strengthen the position of his own party in Rome, has been telling many lies about me here, perhaps for a good purpose.

On the 4th day of May, 1557.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, June 16th, 1557.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I have received the cloth and the silk: as soon as I have found somebody to take it I will send it on, and she [Cornelia, Urbino's widow] will send me the money. Thou wilt let me know about the remainder as soon as thou has done with it as I told thee.

As to my condition, I am in an evil plight, that is to say, I am suffering from all the ailments to which old age is subject; the stone, so that I cannot pass water ; pains in my side and back, so that oftentimes

(*) *I.e.*, Lionardo is to go to Rome if Michelangelo does not go to Florence.

I cannot go up or downstairs. The worst of all is the anxiety which is consuming me, for I have not enough to keep me for three days if I were to let what I have here go to rack and ruin; and although I do not wish on that account to lose the Duke's favour, neither do I wish to desert the fabric of St. Peter's, nor to fail in what is due to my own self. Pray God that He will help and counsel me: and if anything should happen to throw me into a fever of difficulties I will send immediately for thee. Do not think about it, however, and do not set out without waiting until thou receivest my letter summoning thee.

Commend me to Messer Giorgio: he can be of much service to me if he is willing, for I know he stands well in the Duke's favour.

On the 16th day of June, 1557.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, [May . . ., 1557].

To the Most Illustrious Lord Cosimo, Duke of Florence.

MY LORD DUKE,—About three months ago, (*) or rather less, I caused Your Lordship to be informed that I could not desert the fabric of St. Peter's without exposing it to great risks and without the very greatest dishonour to myself: and I said also that, supposing I could obtain all the necessary material, I should require to devote at least another year to the work before I could bring it to the condition in

(*) See the Letter to Lionardo Buonarroti, dated February 13th, 1557, p. 299.

which I should wish to leave it. I asked that I might be excused for this period, and said I thought Your Lordship would be content to grant my request. I have now received a letter from Your Lordship, however, which urges me to return sooner than I had expected; and for that reason I am not a little troubled, as I find myself at this present time face to face with a more difficult and intricate problem than any I have hitherto encountered in respect to the building. I refer to the vaulting in the King of France's chapel, a very difficult and unusual piece of construction where some error has arisen through my being an old man and unable to inspect the work at very frequent intervals. To correct this I am compelled to pull down most of what has already been executed. Bastiano da San Gimignano, who was in charge of the work here, will be able to explain the nature of this chapel as well as the important part it plays in the whole construction. Once this chapel has been put right I think the remainder of the work could be finished by the end of this summer, so that all I should have to do would be to leave them the model for the whole work, as I have been asked to do by everyone, especially by [the Cardinal Rodolfo Pio da] Carpi. Then I should be free to return to Florence with the one thought of preparing to meet death, with whom day and night I am trying to make friends so that at the end he may not treat me worse than other old folk.

And now, to return to the subject of my letter, I beg Your Lordship to grant me this year of grace I am asking for on behalf of St. Peter's, as I

thought Your Lordship was willing to do when I wrote last.

The least of Your Lordship's servants,

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, [May . . ., 1557].

[*To Giorgio Vasari.*]

MESSER GIORGIO, DEAR FRIEND,—God is my witness how much against my will it was that Pope Paul forced me into this work on St. Peter's in Rome ten years ago. If the work had been continued from that time forward as it was begun it would by now have been as far advanced as I had reason to hope, and I should have been able to come to you. But as the work has been retarded the fabric is much behindhand. It began to go slowly just when I reached the most important and difficult part, so that if I were to leave it now it would be nothing less than a scandal that I should let slip all reward for the anxieties with which I have been battling these ten years. I have written this account in reply to your letter because I have also received one from the Duke which fills me with astonishment that His Lordship should deign to write to me in such kindly terms. I thank both God and His Excellency with all my heart. I am wandering from my subject, for both my memory and my thoughts have deserted me and I find writing most difficult, being, as it is, not my profession. What I wish to say is this: I want you to understand what would happen if I were

to leave the aforesaid work and come to Florence. Firstly, I should give much satisfaction to sundry robbers here, and should bring ruin upon the fabric, perhaps causing it to close down for ever: then also I have certain obligations here, as well as a house and other possessions which are worth several thousand crowns, and if I were to depart without permission I do not know what would happen to them: and, finally, my health is in the condition, what with renal and urinary calculi, and pleurisy, that is the common lot of all old people. Maestro Eraldo (*) can bear witness to this, for I owe my life to his skill. You will understand, therefore, that I have not the courage to come to Florence and then return once more to Rome; and that if I am to come to Florence for good and all it is imperative that I should be allowed sufficient time in which to arrange my affairs so that I should never again have to bother about them. It is so long since I left Florence that Pope Clement was still alive when I arrived here, and he did not die until two years later. Messer Giorgio, I commend myself to you, begging you to commend me to the Duke and to do the best you can on my behalf, for there is only one thing left that I should care to do—and that is to die. What I have said of my state of health is more than true. I replied to the Duke as I did because I was told to make some sort of reply, and because I had not the courage to write to His Lordship, especially at such short notice. If I felt able to sit on a horse I would come

(*) Realdo Colombo, a celebrated doctor of the day.

to Florence directly and return here without anyone having knowledge of it.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, July 1st, 1557.

LIONARDO,—I would rather die than lose the Duke's favour. In all my actions I have always endeavoured to be truthful, and if I have delayed my promised coming to Florence it is because I had always understood that this was to be conditional to my having first carried the fabric of St. Peter's to such a stage that the general lines of the composition could neither be altered nor ruined, and to prevent the return of the thieves who used to wait, and are still waiting, for an opportunity to fill their own pockets. I am thus solicitous for the welfare of the building, and have always been so, because there are many who believe—myself among them—that it was God who laid this charge upon me. But for lack of money and workmen I have not yet been successful in bringing the building to the desired condition. I have been unwilling to abandon my task because there was no one I could leave in my place, and because I undertook it for the love of God, in Whom is all my hope. As I wish the Duke to know the cause of the delay I am writing about it in this letter and sending a rough sketch to show the nature of the mistake that has been made, so that Messer Giorgio can inform the Duke on the subject.

On the first day of July, 1557.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, September . . ., 1557.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

Lionardo,—From thy last letter I learnt of the terrible havoc wrought among the bridges and monasteries and houses, together with the number of people who were drowned in the flood. In comparison with what happened to others I think ye were tolerably fortunate. I had already heard about it, so I suppose ye have also heard that we have had a similar disaster here, much damage being done and many persons killed by the flooding of the Tiber. As we are placed on high ground we came off exceeding well in comparison with other people. Pray God no greater harm befall us; which, on account of our sins, I fear.

Matters here are not going very well, I mean with regard to the fabric of St. Peter's; for it is not sufficient to give precise orders as to what is to be done, since, either through ignorance or malice, the foremen always do the opposite, and all the difficulties arising from the mistake fall on my shoulders. As for the rest, thou canst picture for thyself how I am in health if thou bearest in mind my age. I have nothing to add.

Michelagniolo Buonarroti.

The overflowing of its banks by the Arno on September 13th, 1557, was one of the worst floods ever recorded in Florence, and did incalculable damage, the waters rising to a height of seventeen feet in some parts of the city. The Ponte a Santa Trinità was

carried away bodily, while the Ponte alle Grazie suffered considerable damage.

From Rome, December 16th, 1558.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—Bartolomeo Ammannato, overseer of the Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore, has written on behalf of the Duke to ask for information about a certain staircase which has to be built in the Libreria di San Lorenzo. I have blocked out a sketch model in clay showing the way I think the staircase might be contrived, and this I propose to put into a box and to give to whomsoever he shall name as the person who is to send it to Florence. Go and see him, and let him know about it as quickly as possible.

In my last letter I wrote to thee about getting a house, because if I can free myself from my obligations here before death overtakes me I should like to feel that I have a nest in Florence where I could live in independence with my household. For this purpose I propose to realise all that I possess here; and this I shall do at the earliest moment that it can be done without giving offence either in Rome or in Florence, for as I have already said, I am not lucky here.

On the 16th day of December, 1558.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, July 15th, 1559.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I have received the shirts together with the other things mentioned in the letter. Thank

Photo Alinari

CASA BUONARROTI, FLORENCE

Cassandra on my behalf, which thou wilt know how to do without any prompting from me.

I have received two letters, both of which exhort me in pressing terms to return to Florence. I think thou canst not be aware that some four months ago I received permission from the Duke of Florence, through the medium of the Cardinal da Carpi, who is one of the building committee of St. Peter's [*De' Deputati della Fabrica di Santo Pietro*], to continue the erection of the said St. Peter's at Rome. I thanked God from the bottom of my heart for this mercy and was exceedingly pleased: now thou writest to me so warmly on the subject, as I have already said, that I do not know whether thy letters are the outcome of thy desire that I should return to Florence, or whether the situation has changed. Therefore explain thyself more fully, because all these things trouble and vex my peace of mind.

I have to inform thee that the Florentines here are desirous of putting up a large building—their national church, that is to say—and that they have with one accord implored me to undertake the matter, as they are still urging me to do. I replied that I was here by permission of the Duke in order to carry on the work at St. Peter's, and that unless his consent were first obtained they would get nothing out of me.

On the 15th day of June, 1559.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

[P.S.]—Writing is very troublesome to my hand, my eyes and my memory. Such is the effect of age!

The actual date of the letter should be July 15th, Michelangelo's *di Gugnio* being altered to *di Luglio*, in Lionardo's handwriting.

From Rome, November 1st, 1559.

[*To Duke Cosimo de' Medici.*]

Most Illustrious Lord Duke of Florence,—The Florentines here have on many occasions expressed a strong desire to erect a Church in Rome to the honour of St. John. Considering that the present time, when Your Lordship is still living, affords a more propitious occasion than heretofore, they have now resolved to put this project into execution and have appointed five persons to see to the matter; and these men have asked me many times to give them a design for the said church. Being aware that Pope Leo had already begun this church aforesaid I replied that I desired to have nothing to do with it unless I had the permission of, and was instructed to proceed by, the Duke of Florence. Matters have now reached a stage in which I have received a kind and gracious letter from Your Most Illustrious Lordship which I hold to be an express command that I am to give my attention to the aforesaid church of the Florentines, and this I am doing with very great satisfaction to myself. I have already furnished several designs which are suited to the site set aside for the purpose by the committee: and they, being men of great wisdom and sound judgment, have selected the one which I myself honestly consider to be the most suitable. This design I will cause to be drawn out more neatly

than I am able to do myself, by reason of my age, and it shall be sent to Your Most Illustrious Highness, so that whatever shall be directed may be put into execution.

In connection with this work, it grieves me very much to think that I am so old and on such ill terms with life that I cannot promise to do much in the way of supervising the construction: however, I will do my best while remaining in the house to carry out all that may be demanded of me in Your Lordship's name; and may God grant me strength that I fall short of nothing in my duty.

On the 1st day of November, 1559.

Your Excellency's servant,

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,

in Rome.

Paul IV. died on August 18th of this year and was succeeded by Pius IV. on December 25th, the twelfth pontiff elected during the artist's lifetime. The design for the church of San Giovanni was sent to Rome in the following March.

From Rome, January 7th, 1560.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,

in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I have received from the hand of Simon del Bernia fifteen marzolino cheeses and fourteen pounds of sausage—the latter very welcome, as was also the cheese, as there is very little of it to be got here. However, I do not wish thee to spend any more money on such things because

personally I can make use of only a small portion of them.

I wrote to thee about buying a house in Florence so that before I die I may invest there what I have in Rome. I do not know what will happen, for everything is in the greatest confusion.

I would like thee to tell Ammannato that on Saturday I will send him the model of the stairs of the Libreria, either in charge of that relation of his or by the letter-carrier, whichever will be quickest and best.

Since writing the above an arrangement has been made with the said relation—that is to say, with his wife's father, (*) that he was to send it by some muleteer either yesterday or to-day, Saturday, for it would get broken if it were sent by the letter-carrier. This relation, however, has so far failed to put in an appearance, and it is now evening. I have sent to his house, and find he is not in Rome. When he comes back I will give it to him as directed.

MICHELAGNIOLO,
in Rome.

[P.S.]—Tell Ammannato about this, and commend me to him.

From Rome, March [15th], 1560.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I did not reply to thy last letter because I had no time: I now tell thee I was glad to hear about the baby girl, because as we are alone in

(*) Bartolomeo Ammannato married Laura, the daughter of Giovanni Antonio Battiferro.

the world it would be a good thing if we could contract an advantageous alliance with some other family. Keep this matter ever in thy mind, for when that time comes I shall no longer be here. I have written telling thee to come to Rome; as I have already said, I will let thee know when thou art to set out. I may add that the greatest of all my worries in Rome is the answering of letters.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, . . ., [1560].

To the Cardinal Ridolfo Pio da Carpi.

MOST REVEREND MONSIGNORE,—When a plan has diverse parts all those which are alike in quality and quantity must be treated according to one model and in one style, and the same applies to the parts which pair with them. But when the whole arrangement of a plan is changed it is not only permissible but necessary to change the style of the decorations both in the one and in the counterpart. Odd features may always be treated independently, in the same way as the nose, which stands in the middle of the face, is not dependent upon either eye, although one hand must of necessity correspond with the other, and one eye with the other, because they are placed at the sides and are in pairs. Wherefore it is very certain that architectural members ought to follow the same rule as the members of the human body. He that has not mastered, or does not master, the human figure, and in especial its anatomy, can never comprehend it.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI.

From Rome, . . ., [1560].

To the Overseers of the Fabric of St. Peter's.

Ye know that I told Balduccio he was not to send us any lime unless it was of good quality. As what he has now sent is of inferior quality there can be no question about his having to take it back, and it is to be supposed that he was in league with whoever accepted it. This is a great victory for the people I dismissed from the works for similar practices; and whoever accepts bad materials in place of those of the necessary quality after I have prohibited it is merely currying favour with such persons as I have made my enemies. I think there must be some fresh conspiracy afoot. Promises, tips (*mancie*) and gifts will ever obstruct the path of justice. Therefore I beg of you, in the name of such authority as I have received from the Pope, never henceforth to accept anything which is not suitable for the work—even if it were to be sent from Heaven. I have no favourites, and I do not wish to appear as though I had.

Your Michelagniolo.

From Rome, September 13th, 1560.

To the Most Illustrious and Reverend Lord and Master, the Most Worshipful Lord Cardinal of Carpi. (*)

Most Illustrious and Reverend, My Most Worshipful Lord and Master,—Messer Francesco Bandini told me yesterday that your Most Illustrious

(*) *All' Illustrissimo e reverendissimo signore et patrone colendissimo il signor Cardinale di Carpi.* This magnificent form of address must surely have been intended ironically by Michelangelo.

and Reverend Lordship had said the fabric of St. Peter's could not possibly be worse conducted than it is at present. This grieved me excessively both because Your Lordship has not been told the truth and because I, as in duty bound, desire more than any other man, that the work should proceed satisfactorily. Unless I deceive myself I believe I should have no difficulty in proving that, with due regard to the amount of work in hand, it could not be progressing better. But inasmuch as personal considerations and old age may perhaps too readily obscure my judgment and cause me, however unwillingly, to prejudice the aforesaid building, or bring harm upon it; for these reasons I have decided that at the earliest opportunity I shall ask His Holiness Our Lord Pope to set me at liberty. Indeed, to save time I now entreat Your Most Illustrious and Reverend Lordship to be kind enough to free me forthwith from this task, which, as Your Lordship knows, I have endeavoured without payment to carry out during the last seventeen years, by command of successive Popes. The progress made in the fabric during these years is in itself manifest. If I am successful in obtaining permission to relinquish my task I shall consider it as the greatest kindness that could be conferred upon me. With all reverence I humbly kiss the hand of Your Most Illustrious and Reverend Lordship.

From my house, in Rome, on the 13th day of September, in the year LX.

Your Most Illustrious and Reverend Lordship's
Humble Servant.

From Rome, March 22nd, 1561.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I shall expect thee after the [Easter] festival, or at whatever time is suitable for thee, for the matter is of no importance. See that thou hast good company on the road, but bring not with thee anyone that will expect to be entertained in my house, for I have no servants here and but little furniture. In two or three days thou wilt be free to return again to Florence for I can tell thee all I have to say in a few words.

On the twenty-second day of March, one thousand five hundred and sixty-one.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, July 18th, 1561.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I wrote to thee acknowledging the arrival of the Trebbiano, and just lately I wrote again to say I should be glad to hear how Francesca was: I have had no reply at all. And now, being an old man, as thou knowest well, I should like to do something for the welfare of my soul—to bestow something in charity, that is to say; for I can perform no other pious act that I know of. I desire, therefore, to have a certain sum paid over to thee in Florence, which thou art to pay out, or rather distribute, in alms wherever the need is greatest. This sum will amount to about three hundred crowns. I have asked Bandini about it: that is, I have asked him

to have it paid out in Florence for me, and he replied that within the next four months he would deliver it in person. I do not wish to wait so long, so that if thou hast some Florentine friend to whom I could give the money and be sure that it would reach thee, let me know, and I will adopt this course. Thou wilt let me know that it has arrived.

On the eighteenth day of July, one thousand five hundred and sixty-one.

MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

From Rome, September 20th, 1561.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I would like thee to look through the papers belonging to our father Lodovico and see if there is a copy of a contract drawn up in the form used by the Apostolic Chamber and referring to certain figures I promised to carve for Pope Pius III. after his death. (*) Owing to certain difficulties which arose this work was abandoned about fifty years ago, and as I am an old man I should like to get the matter settled now so that ye may not be worried about it unjustly when I am gone. I seem to remember that the name of the notary who drew up the contract in the Bishop's Palace was Ser Donato Ciampelli. They tell me all his papers were handed over to Ser Lorenzo Violi, so that if thou canst not

(*) The fifteen statues which, in 1501, Michelangelo undertook to carve for the Piccolomini Chapel in the Cathedral at Siena.

discover the said copy in our house thou mayst yet be able to find out from the son of Ser Lorenzo aforesaid whether he has this contract *in forma Camera*. If he has, spare no money in obtaining a copy thereof.

On the 20th day of September, 1561.

I, MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI,
in Rome.

There are several letters between this and the one here placed next to it, but they are all short and of no interest, being for the most part acknowledgments of letters or presents received.

From Rome, August 21st, 1563.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,
in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I see from thy letter that thou has lent thine ear to certain envious and rascally persons who, finding they can neither rob nor deceive me, have written thee a lot of lies. They are a gang of greedy robbers, and thou art a fool to listen to what they tell thee about me, as though I were a baby. Drive them from thy sight, like the envious scandal-mongers and evil livers they are. As to the unsatisfactory manner in which I am being looked after and the other things of which thou writest ; as to the former, I tell thee I could not possibly be better cared for, nor served more faithfully nor tended more satisfactorily than I am at present. As to my being robbed—for this I suppose is what thou wouldst imply—I tell thee that the people I have in the house are all persons in whom I can trust, and with whom I can live tranquilly. Therefore, look to thine own way of

living and do not trouble about my affairs, for I know how to look after myself if necessary, and am not a child. Take care of thy health.

From Rome, the 21st day of August, 1563.

MICHELAGNIOLO.

From Rome, December 28th, 1563.

To Lionardo di Buonarroto Simoni,

in Florence.

LIONARDO,—I have received thy last letter together with a dozen marzolino cheeses. I thank thee for them, rejoicing to hear that ye are all well, as also am I. I have received several letters from thee of late to which I have not replied because my hand refused to write. In the future, therefore, I shall get others to write for me and will sign the letters myself. I have nothing to add.

From Rome, on the 28th day of December, 1563.

I, MICHELAGNIOLO BUONARROTI.

With this short note the letters of Michelangelo come to an end, at least so far as we know. If other letters were written while Atropos still held her long-delayed hand we know not of them ; we know not what tale they may have told of increasing infirmities or of Death's kindly overtures, welcoming the aged artist to his well-earned repose. It does not matter over much, for his lifework with all its promise, its disillusionment and its disappointment already lay well behind him. His friends were dead, his brothers, younger than he all of them, had preceded him to the grave so long before that their places missed

them no more: Lionardo was married and surrounded by his own occupations and family ties. Michelangelo died on February 18th, 1564, in Rome, but his body was smuggled in a bale of merchandise to Florence and laid to rest in Santa Croce—" our own Quarter," as he called it, in which he had so frequently expressed a desire to possess an honourable abiding place for himself where he could be in peace. Truly he has found what he sought, and withal an abode of such permanence that, after the manner of earthly things, we may call it Eternal.

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